



messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 35 – Number 8

December 2017

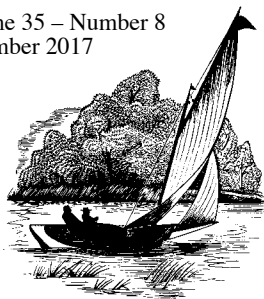
Special Features This Issue
The 2017 Sail Boston Windjammer Parade
Return to the MASCF - Adirondack Experience
The Extreme Raid 2016 - Mast Hoops on a Roll
Something About Boat Camping
Running a Trotline from a Crabbing Skiff
Launching of a 32' Cornish Pilot Gig



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Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor

As we wrap up another calendar year with this issue, long time regular columnist/contributor Matthew Goldman is calling it quits, he concludes his final column opposite with, "And now I am off to wend my autumnal estuary in the twilight, and so, farewell all." Matthew's "From the Journals of Constant Waterman" first turned up on our pages in the July 1, 2005 issue and we reprint that first essay below his swan song opposite. After a couple of issues when it became apparent that he intended to be a regular contributor we moved his column to the "Op Ed" page where it has appeared almost every issue for now 12 years.

Regular readers may have detected hints that something was about to happen when in the October issue he stated, "One of these days in the not too far off future I hope to be caught up with all these carking projects that distract me from the ocean. If and when I sell my rental property in Mystic I'll have a bit of capital and far fewer responsibilities. What a novel situation. Income enough to feed *MoonWind*, and leisure enough to go sailing for weeks at a time."

Then in the November issue we learned this was not to be when he told us, "Will this be the last time I get to wet *Moonwind's* anchor? It has come to selling my beloved boat in order to pay our bills, as our Colonial Cape in Mystic hasn't sold. We are both unemployed and eking but a precarious existence from our respective crafts."

Matthew has pursued his craft as a writer and illustrator rather than chase a "career" for the money. Both his writing and his illustrating have brought pleasure to those fortunate to have come across his work. It has not brought him fame and wealth. On our pages over a dozen years several thousand readers have enjoyed his columns (which he shared with us without payment as we had nothing with which to pay him for his work) and more have acquired copies of his books and illustrations therein. As the guy who for-

matted his regular columns (150+) for your enjoyment every issue, I never tired of his whimsical observations while adventuring with his beloved *Moon Wind*.

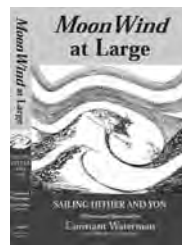
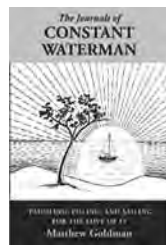
His comment about "eking but a precarious existence from our respective crafts" describes a lifestyle with which I am quite familiar. When I quit my engineering job in the then new semiconductor industry in 1960 I embarked on that lifestyle and have been living it ever since. There has never been the "security" of predictable income but we always managed to make enough to live on and had a great time doing it (still are). Back in the beginning when I found that my writing was not going to get published by anyone, I figured the only way it would be was to create a publication in which to print it, so here we are.

Over our now 35 years a number of devoted contributors have graced our pages for the pleasure of sharing their stories with us all. Unlike Matthew, some have suddenly reached the ends of their lives while still contributing. Robb White, Jim Thayer and Hugh Ware are examples, still "in harness" when the end came for them. Other early ones are still with us as readers now. Their regular presence on our pages over all these years formed a sort of backbone on which we could then flesh out each issue with the hundreds of one off stories sent by so many. Thanks to them all we always seem to have had enough news to fill each issue.

The sudden departures of those like Robb, Jim and Hugh didn't give us time to properly thank them for all they did for us. I think it would be a nice gesture for those so inclined to thank Matthew as he "wends his autumnal estuary in the twilight" with a card to him at 30 Edward Ave, Griswold, CT 06351-3504 or email at matthew@constantwaterman.com. Perhaps you'd like to buy one of his books if you haven't already, *Journal of Constant Waterman* or *Moonwind at Large*, from his website at www.constantwaterman.com.

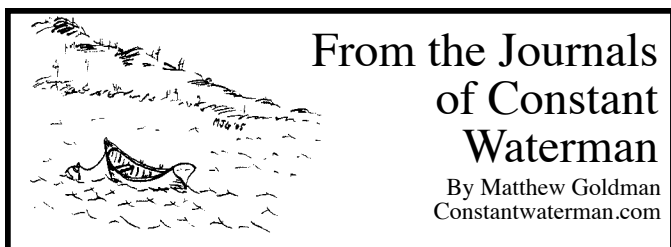
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On the Cover...

The Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum's Annual Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival sails and rows on, #34 this year and as good as ever. Billed for years as a family oriented small craft meet, this year the kids got to build and compete in cardboard boats, pictured on the cover is an early stage of the race before the cardboard began to get soggy. Some families are now bringing along their third generation to join the fun. Greg Grundtisch has more photos on pages 10 and 11.



From the Journals of Constant Waterman

By Matthew Goldman
Constantwaterman.com

Some days we would walk into town from my aunt's summer home on Cape Ann to shop for groceries and visit the small library. It was here that I met the Water Rat and the Mole. At age seven, they were just my size, and I loved them at once and forever. The copy I read, and read, and read again had no pictures. It wasn't until decades later, on my third copy, that I encountered Ernest Shepard's delightful drawings.

Kenneth Grahame never talked down to his readers. He described, with love, the River, the fields, the byways. He explored the thoughts and emotions of his characters: their ecstasy, their depression; their lassitude; their delight. The emotional and egocentric Toad; the stolid Badger; the bold, ingenious Otter – all came alive.

I purchased, a few years ago, a copy of *Wind in the Willows* for my grandson, replete with excellent illustrations in color – a vibrant and responsive interpretation of a lovely world still to be found if one knows how to look. But three of the dozen chapters had been omitted. Dulce Domum, The Piper at the Gates of Dawn, and Wayfarers All had been left out. This is a grave injustice to the children who read this classic. Some editor assumed that children have no need of wistfulness, nor paganism, nor dissatisfaction with the mundane. I suppose that some good Christian took offense with the Pantheism of the world of Kenneth Grahame's creatures. Or who couldn't abide the thought of Awe in a modern child's life. The cloven hoof reprehends the righteousness of the educators who think corruption goes hand in hoof with Panic.

We despise the thought of venery, of hunting. Bambi must not be harmed. But it's perfectly all right to encourage youngsters to play with video games in which they blow up evil, cartoon enemies by the carload, and modern warfare is no longer a hand to hand battle to the death, but merely the video game of the high elevation bombers that murder thousands of women and children, level hospitals, schools, and churches with a single twitch of a trigger. Impersonal destruction can be such fun! Bam! There goes another village! My score's higher than your score! Bam! Kill some Commies for Christ!

But the frenzy of the ravaging wolf for the rabbit must never be taught. Life and death and war must be neither a mystery, inspiration, nor a reality. I became a vegetarian forty years ago after having killed numerous animals. Did need demand, I would do it once again to feed myself.

The Wind in the Willows is an idyll, but an idyll inspiring thought. The gamut of emotion is probed, and only the harshest emotions, the

throes of birth, of death, and mutilation, are omitted. An ideal world, perhaps, but necessary to show the plausible, peaceful interactions of simple souls. The violence at the end of the book, "The Return of Ulysses", would not offend a novice at a nunnery. The beating of the weasels and stoats has not the blood and gore of a modern film, nor is it touted as being an ideal to which we should aspire. The Badger specifically admonishes the Rat for passing out a brace of pistols to each of the heroes. No shot is fired – a clubbing more than suffices. And, even so, no bones are broken. Various weasels come by the next day to apologize for their pillage. There are no grudges; no retribution or revenge. The cudgels of the heroes are, metaphorically, soon cut up to feed the kitchen fire.

And I, more interested in kitchen fires than gore, destruction, and retribution, shall continue to rock by the fire and dream, or ply my local River with Ratty and Mole. Our craze for violence, depicted daily in close ups of blood and mayhem, serves no end except to glorify, to promulgate violence. Shootings of schoolchildren, rape and murder, infest our televisions and computers every minute. As ever, Alas! Little boys stage mock battles to help become responsible adults. I, too, killed my enemies with a wooden sword and imaginary bombs, then graduated to hunting – but only animals. Generations of learning to hunt other men has left the mark of Cain upon our brows, furrowed now by intolerance, love of violence, and oppression.

Though domination is a virtue of the male of every species, it is limited, with the beasts, to the interests of propagation and food supply. Only man harbors desires to rule others for the sake of ego; to amass unwieldy wealth that must be defended; to design beliefs that demand the suppression, nay, the deaths, of millions. Are we mad?

And so I sit on my river bank and dream of desultory days and starry nights; or else go off in my boat with Ratty and Mole, little caring if ever I return. And now I am off to wend my autumnal estuary in the twilight. And so – farewell, all.



July 1, 2005: Constant Waterman First Appears on Our Pages

We had a wretched time fighting with the outboard. It had started easily and taken us out of West Cove without complaint. We'd set our sails for Stonington, Connecticut, and killed the little motor, tipping it up and out of the water as usual. The breeze was ample and out of the west and we had no need to tack the whole way down. We rounded up off Stonington Point and steered to pass behind Sandy Point and enter the channel that joins with the mouth of the Pawcatuck River. Drawing 4', we hadn't but a few yards breadth of safe water between the green light and the shoals and in summertime the traffic through here can be daunting. Prudence dictated, "have the motor running."

I flopped the motor into the water, pulled the cord twice, and it started, ran 20 seconds, and died. Again with the same result. We passed the red marker and I jibed her about. I swore at the motor and got it started once more. It caught, it kicked, it sputtered, it grunted, it forswore service to all of mankind forever. I taught it a new word and gave my attention to the tiller. The wind was dead astern and I slacked the main. The genoa flapped twice and crossed to starboard, now we were wing and wing, "wung out" as the old timers say.

The boom was nestled up against the shrouds and stooping down and peering beneath it I spied a big Bayliner coming straight at us. It was evident we would meet at the narrows with only the scantiest clearance. On her foredeck lazed a bathing beauty clothed in little more than her natural endowments. On our present courses my outhaul and his outrigger were bound to get intimate. I straddled the tiller and hauled in the main sheet, sailing by the lee for the merrest moment. The bathing beauty blinked as the shadow of my sail interrupted her tan and the skipper fixed me with a baleful glare. "Sailboats," I imagined him mutter.

He shoved his throttles forward as he passed the mark and the Bayliner leapt with a growl and a roar. I slacked my main quickly, wallowed once in his wake, and ran down the channel with nary a sound. We rounded '22' at the mouth of the river and headed for the lee of Napatree Beach. I brought her up shaking, and dropped the Danforth and, just to be safe, payed out my whole rode, dropped a second hook astern. I never did like using just one anchor when staying anyplace where the tide would change. Much too easy to foul my anchor and end up dragging and drifting.

This time of year a hundred small craft are sharing this anchorage and some are more savvy than others. Just upwind a larger sloop was joined by two sisters and the three of them rafted together for the night. The sunset was magnificent, the water placid. We lounged in the cockpit and savored our supper. I lit the anchor light and we both turned in.

At 5am I slid open the hatch and watched the sun climbing up Watch Hill. When I looked about it seemed to me the three boats were closer. "I need some coffee," I thought to myself I went below and did the needful, started the coffee and put on my shoes. When I came on deck the three sailboats were just off my quarter and closing quickly, their one anchor dragging. I uncled my stern anchor but didn't cast it off. I hadn't any time to fetch a buoy for it, let alone bend it on, but I hated to lose it. Straddling the taffrail, the rode in one fist, I seized a stanchion of the nearest boat and braced myself to keep us apart. Not a big deal, just 20 tons of boats and my anchor trying to pull me overboard. "Hello" I holleredm anyone below?"

After a moment a hatch was raised and a tousled countenance squinted out. "Is anything the matter?" he asked.



You write to us about...

Information of Interest...

Tell Your Story of the Hudson River A Call for Oral Histories

Do you remember bluestone quarrying, boat building and cement making along the Rondout? Do you remember ice harvesting, commercial fishing and other local industries on the Hudson River? Do your parents or grandparents have wonderful stories of life on the river and in the Hudson Valley? The Hudson River Maritime Museum has launched a renewed effort to collect the oral history of work and life on the Hudson River and the Rondout Creek.

So far the Museum has compiled a significant collection of oral histories, including recollections of local commercial fishermen. These oral histories are invaluable and irreplaceable resources for scholars, researchers and all those interested in preserving our shared experience of life on the river. But the Museum wants to capture as many diverse voices as possible before they are lost. We want to hear your memories. We are especially interested in hearing the histories of women, boat workers and ordinary people along the Rondout, in Kingston and Port Ewen and up and down the Hudson River.

Trained staff members and volunteers will conduct the oral history interviews which normally take one to two hours and will be arranged to fit your schedule. Please contact Carla Lesh, Assistant Curator, at clsh@hrmm.org or (845) 338-0071, ext 21 to set up your interview. We need your help to preserve our history!

The New York Knicks Own Her

In response to Reinhard Zollitsch's reflection about the 117' ketch rigged luxury yacht *Knickerbocker* in his article in the October issue entitled "Around Frenchman Bay and Mt Desert Island, Maine," please be advised that the owners of the New York Knicks are, in fact, her owners. Nice article! S.L. Corkery, Long Island, NY

The Largest Lake?

In a recent "Commentary" (July) I noted that you identified Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire as New England's largest lake. Vermont owns Lake Champlain (except for its New York shoreline) and it is #1. Then comes Moosehead in Maine. I don't know where Sebago in Maine fits but perhaps it is smaller than Lake Winnepesaukee.

Jack Gregg, York, ME

Information Wanted...

Looking for Super Sunfish Type Mast

From time to time, over a long period of time, I have studied the idea of arranging a sailing rig other than that normally provided

by the maker of the boat. I have never really considered building a boat but a rig change often occupied my thoughts. The making of a mast from wood has been brought to a very high level of expertise what with "birds mouth" joints in laminated, hollow, Sitka spruce and so forth. That kind of thing has always stopped me, I guess because I'm just too lazy. So I have looked around for satisfactory alternatives. I have sought to find a tapered, thin walled aluminum spar on the shelf somewhere but, of course, such items are hard to find.

One of the members of the "Darien Sunfish Yacht Racing Association" (the name of the Connecticut racing club of which I once was a member), John Black Lee, an architect in New Canaan, Connecticut, designed the "Super Sunfish" with which you may be familiar, having a jib headed single sail sleeved (I believe) onto a tapered aluminum mast. John arranged with someone to make him a substantial number of those masts with which John was able to supply the needs of a number of enthusiasts who bought Super Sunfish. John is, or was, about five years older than I and, as he wound down his support of the Super Sunfish, the unsold masts were sold off, the last of them as scrap metal. What a shame. I had at the time neither the means to buy them up nor a strong feeling for how the resourceful boaters would value them in the coming years.

Nevertheless, there must be a source or sources for adaptable aluminum masts. I contacted a company called American Flag Pole Company to inquire about one of their products, a jointed, stepped down unit that might serve pretty well, but to get one they insisted I buy their complete kit with flag, halyard and the works, including their mast top pulley fitting.

All of the foregoing has to do with finding a source for ready made items that would meet the needs of "you guys," meaning the rigger uppers out there. Have any of you found something suitable to your knowledge? Incidentally, I remember seeing a very early Sunfish, or Sailfish, which had a beautiful tapered mast. Too short, I suppose, but they existed.

Garry Osborn, 7213 S Chase Way, Littleton, CO 80128

This Magazine...

Not Sailing Alone

I wanted to reflect on 87-year-old Winslow Maxwell's interrupted cruise to Florida, narrated by his vessel's builder and part time cruise companion, Tony Davis. The writer's anguish I can appreciate as he tries to reconcile profiting from a project hazardous to his 87-year-old customer's health, the intrusion of family feast day imperatives and his commitment to launch the skipper successfully on his voyage. Health concerns surface early with the reference to balance issues, which indeed also hinder my activities such as scrambling forward to retrieve a mooring or shifting adroitly to windward when tacking.

Maxwell's odyssey reminds me of Tennyson's Ulysses except that Ulysses felt that his ship and crew were waiting for him, unlike Maxwell's solo voyage. Yet I don't think he felt he was sailing alone.

Bill Sayres, Wayne, ME

A Wonderful Tale

Bob, you have outdone yourself, publishing that October cover story by Tony Davis, a wonderful rendition of boating, caring and living life to its fullest. God bless. Kent Lacey, Old Lyme, CT

Made Him Cry

I've been a subscriber and avid reader of *MAIB* for years. I look forward to each issue with great anticipation. The stories pique my curiosity, satisfy my gearhead tendencies, cause me to think and often make me laugh out loud. Tony Davis' beautiful story about "The Maiden Voyage of the *Gracie Anne*" made me cry. Thank you for that.

Peter Bachmann, Ridgefield, CT

Last Dream Fulfilled

What a wonderful tale of friendship, aging and adventure. I'm sure Mr Davis builds boats as well as he writes and this fits the bill perfectly. It is more than just an account of events but a story of a last dream fulfilled with both human kindness and perseverance and thank goodness for the AIS tracker. This is the kind of stuff that makes *MAIB* so enduring.

George Haecker

Going Out Gracefully

A wonderful commentary in the October issue. Much more to the point and heartfelt than AARP which, I suspect, is written by young people. I loved the cover story of Winston Maxwell. It's a story of the foot on the gas until the foot no longer works. I hope we all can be as true to our dreams and aspirations. In 36 years with runabouts I haven't had quite such a determined octogenarian customer. One man I bought a boat from purchased a 23' fiberglass boat he admired, ran her 15 minutes in November and passed away several days later. The dealer took the boat back from his widow and sold it as a "demonstrator."

The "best" story, if talking about someone's death can be a good, better, or best situation, was a good customer and friend who decided to refuse treatment for liver cancer and ran his boat by himself on a Sunday up at his lifetime cottage on a lake in the Adirondacks and died on the following Wednesday. His son-in-law called me to let me know and I said that I didn't even know he was sick. "Neither did I," was the answer.

Boyd Mefferd, Boyd's Boats, Canton, CT



Editor Bob's Excellent (Virtual) Adventures (Postscript)

Upon viewing his page of my "virtual" kayaking adventures in the November issue, photo wizard Harvey determined that the photos did not present images that were "adventurous" enough and so here we have an upgrade to a more spectacular scene based on my virtually taking on the local surf caused by the passage of Hurricane Irma in September. How'd that surfer guy get in my way like that?



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Missed Op-Sails

I felt bad missing out on the last big windjammer parade in Boston (in 2000) and the equally big one in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada the same year. I could have easily driven there, but I got totally overwhelmed figuring out where I would see it from and what I would actually see and how I would get there and stay there, along with the throngs of other spectators wanting the same.

So, when the next big Boston parade of sail was announced, I decided to find a plan B to see those big old windjammers like the ones my grandfather had sailed on as a young man. I felt I owed it to him to gawk, admire and pay my respects to the bygone days of the great commercial sailing fleet. He had told me stories about sailing around the Horn to northern Chile in the salt peter trade as well as to Sydney, Australia in the wool trade. As a kid I had longingly looked at a picture of him at the wheel, clad in full oilskins, as well as marveled at the smallish bark *Minna Helene* that he had sailed on. I wanted to do the same, but as you know, German history made this impossible, and I ended up being a university professor in the far-away land of Maine, USA.



My gandpa W. Zollitsch at the wheel.



Barque *Minna Helene*.

But then one day, I heard that the Maine schooner *American Eagle* was going to sail from Rockland, Maine to Boston June 14-24, 2017 and be part of the Sail Boston parade on June 17. I had sailed with skipper John Foss twice before and instantly e-mailed him that I would be interested in coming along, in cabin J, as before.

Almost a year went by, and I had already given up being one of the 28 lucky guys seeing the parade, when I got a brief note saying "you are on, in cabin J". I was elated. Just think, no long drive to Boston, no transportation, parking, housing, feeding and

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An Inside View Of The 2017 Sail Boston Windjammer Parade

By Reinhard Zollitsch
reinhard@maine.edu

www.ZollitschCanoeAdventures.com



Getting ready for **Sail Boston** parade.

crowd problems (Boston expected two million visitors). I was even going to be part of the parade of 50 tall ships from 14 countries, not just seeing it from some distant, crowded viewing point, without food, beer and bathroom. And to boot, I would get the chance to sail on that lovely, classic 92' wooden Gloucester-built schooner for 10 days, sailing down the Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts coastlines to Boston Harbor and back up again.

It helps to have an understanding wife to let me go, help scrape up the money, and drive me to Rockland, a mere 2 hours away from our home.

The Sail Down to Beantown

At 6pm on June 14, 28 windjammer fans from all over the US as well as 6 crew miraculously appeared at the Rockland dock for the check-in. Skipper, crew and the other 27 passengers were as excited as I was, and everybody could not wait to get going. However, after a brief introduction and the obligatory safety drill, most everybody hit the sack, since we had a very long day ahead of us.



Author about to board Rockland schooner *American Eagle*.

We are off! Rockland breakwater light in background.



Lines were cast off at sunrise (about 5am) and we motor-sailed toward the breakwater lighthouse and the entrance of Mussel Ridge Channel in Owl's Head. Breakfast was served on deck in that very protected thoroughfare. Visibility was great, but the wind had sprung up from the southeast, and the seas were getting noticeably rougher. We put a reef in the main and were still heeling, sailing hard on the wind, so that water came rushing through the scuppers, keeping the starboard deck wet and impassable. Everybody on the foredeck got drenched, even after we had lowered main and jib. So Skipper ordered everybody on deck to don life jackets. Most of us wore Gore-Tex rain suits, and quite a number of the guests were already clutching water buckets, looking downright miserable. I loved it! This was sailing for me! On every bigger wave, when the boat fell off the crest, the bell on the fore mast rang with one eerie, ominous clang...

I had thought we would anchor off Peaks Island in Casco Bay for the night as we did in previous trips, but no, skipper pushed on all the way to Gloucester, Massachusetts, Beaufort, "the good harbor", as Champlain had named it in 1605. After 17 hours and 120 miles we finally dropped anchor behind the mighty breakwater off Niles Beach. Many of us were breathing a sigh of relief, finally being able to clutch a drink in one hand, and a hunk o' cheese 'n' cracker in the other. It was 10pm. This first day had definitely turned out rougher than most of us had anticipated. For many of the other passengers, it was the roughest day at sea ever and all hoped for a smoother second day into Boston.

We pushed off early again, about 5am, but the reef stayed in and we encountered about the same conditions as yesterday, plus fog. We were instructed by the Sail Boston organizers to anchor off Nahant, just north of Boston Harbor, which would serve as the staging area for the parade the next day. Numerous tall ships and schooners were already there, bounding at anchor in the shallower waters and big swells. Skipper Foss wisely decided to sail deeper into Boston Bay and anchor in the more sheltered gap between Long and Spectacle Island. The Camden ketch *Angelique* had the same idea. Good choice, since the fog closed in for good.

What about the fireworks behind Spectacle Island, but more importantly, the parade tomorrow? Would it be canceled, or would all boats ghost in a grey cloak of misty, gloomy FOG? We did not come for that! And as I was thinking those bad thoughts, the fireworks started and were even visible high above Spectacle Island. I called everybody on deck to see it, and the mood improved noticeably.

The Parade



Into the fog.

The fog on the morning of June 17 was even thicker, but nobody spoke of canceling the show. First we had to sail out again to the staging area off Nahant, where we saw even fewer boats... but they were there, for sure. We heard a chorus of foghorns. We were then notified the parade was postponed for one hour, then two... And would you believe it, the fog lifted ever so slowly. We could see the big 3-masted barque *Europa* as well as the sleek schooner *Adirondack*, with whom we were to parade in. I also recognized the Canadian schooner *Bluenose II*, as well as the two Massachusetts based schooners *Adventure* and *Roseway*. The Coast Guard barque *Eagle* led the parade, followed by the huge square riggers *Esmeralda*, *Union*, *Guayas* and *Alexander von Humboldt II*. There even was a reproduction of a 16th-century Spanish galleon in the parade, the *El Galeon Andalucia*.



Our parade group, the barque *Europa* and the schooner *Adirondack*.

Spectator crowds at Castle Island.



When we finally got to the entrance of the inner harbor at Castle Island, it was jam-packed with spectators, and the fog was nothing more than a minor nuisance. The full parade made it fine towards the Charlestown Navy Yard, where tugs with big, padded bow pushers stood by to assist the bigger boats turning around. We headed for pier #4, right beside the *USS Constitution* dock, in full view of the Charles River locks, the Zakim Bridge and the impressive Boston skyline. Four other schooners tied up, two abreast, at that same pier #4 (*Angelique*, *Spirit of South Carolina*, *Harvey Gamage*, *Shenandoah*). It turned into a jolly schooner gam.



Schooner gam along pier #4.

This was it, we were in, and the parade, according to the news media, was a great success, the biggest one ever, we learned, when they came aboard to interview a few of us. As

the sun came out, we felt very accomplished and proud. We jovially waved to the endless stream of spectator boats filing by. I was sipping a proper Sam Adams Boston Lager, while taking many too many pictures. It felt good! I did it! It all worked out, but was not really easy.



Getting ship-shape for the many spectators and cameras.

On shore, spectators ambled by, ooh-ing and ahing at our boats, and asking many questions, which I never mind answering, being an old teacher and all that. Then suddenly there was a loud, agonizing scream from a little girl who had scraped her knee bloody tripping on the hard concrete sidewalk. I told the concerned young mother not to worry, I would be right there with my first aid kit. We washed the wound carefully, dried it and put anti-inflammatory bacitracin and two large Band-Aids on it. A granola bar from my pocket made the little girl smile as she walked away with her mom. My Red Cross wilderness first aid course has come in very handy in past years, for me and others around me. I know, you don't need wilderness first aid to administer bacitracin and a Band-Aid, but please do consider signing up for some version of first aid and CPR, my friends. It does not hurt at all!



Barque *Picton Castle* with Boston skyline.

The tall ships' modern replacement.



Messing About in Boats, December 2017 – 7

The Day Off

It was sunny and warm and we had the entire day off till supper. The docks were full of people, and there was lots to see and do. There were five schooners tied up on our pier alone, and there was the huge, old warship, the *USS Constitution, Old Ironsides*, so named because of her sturdy planking. However, she was still in drydock getting a major overhaul, including new copper sheathing below the waterline (to keep marine growth from penetrating the wood). I also visited the USS Constitution Museum, which I found interesting, but less exciting than the real world outside.



USS Constitution in dry dock.

After listening to two bands, mostly playing sea shanties and Irish fiddle and squeezebox music, I returned to my little world aboard ship, wrote my diary, phoned Nancy on my satellite phone (it was Father's Day) and alternately drank coffee and yet another Sam Adams. Life was good.



A true tall ship.

Homeward Bound

Angelique, who was moored inside of us, was itching to get back to Camden, hopefully in one long day and evening. So we had to shift lines to let her out, and decided this was our signal to leave also. The sun rose beautifully in the east, as wood smoke wafted

from the stovepipe, promising hot coffee and biscuits. Nice, not to have to cook, I thought. How different from all my coastal boat camping I do in my 17' sea canoe, carrying all gear and food supplies for up to three weeks without re-supplying, except for topping off my drinking water, of course.



Homeward bound with wind abaft.



The good life.

The return trip up to Gloucester was smooth with winds from abaft, and very familiar. We saw a number of whales, but most of them, so it seemed, surfaced on the other side of the boat and were too far away, so that I only saw half of them, if that. But it was nice to know they were there. In Gloucester we tied up at the Gloucester Marine Museum, where we had tied up twice before for the big schooner races there on Labor Day weekend. The museum was again somewhat disappointing. There was no picture of the local fishing schooner that won the first hotly contested race between Gloucester and Lunenburg, Canada, the *Esperanto*. Nor did I see any photo of the eleven-time winner of the more recent races, our Gloucester-built *American Eagle*. I pointed it out to an official, but only got a shrug in response.

What picked me up again, was seeing our skipper rowing off in the smart little dinghy *Roscoe* to fetch lobsters for the big dinner tonight. Oh, were they good! And I have to admit, I did not stop with one, but went right on, since there were so many extras. A glass of white Moscato wine washed lobsters, corn on the cob and garden salad down beautifully. This was our celebration of the big event, as well as a celebration for our schooner *American Eagle*, which was built here in 1930.

Approaching the Isles of Shoals.



Skipper getting lobsters for the crew and guests.

Our next stop was the Isles of Shoals, off Portsmouth, right on the New Hampshire/Maine border. A group of islands (Star, Cedar, Smuttynose and Appledore) formed a perfect anchorage for our boat. This place (Gosport Harbor) was used as a major cod fishing port in the old days. After that, it was used for fancy summer vacationers, who lived, dined and mingled there in a huge wooden hotel. Nowadays it is used for conferences of all sorts, mostly with an environmental or religious thrust. An oversized lobster boat serves as a ferry to the mainland, Portsmouth, that is.



Anchored in Gosport Harbor/Isles of Shoals

I finally got the chance to row little *Roscoe* around the island archipelago. A beautiful sunset in the west levered up an equally stunning moon in the east. It was a beautiful, clear, starry night.

Leaving the Isles of Shoals, we saw some more whales, even followed them at a distance, but then went back on course towards Portland and anchored behind Peaks Island in Casco Bay. I got yet another chance to row little *Roscoe*, just as the sun set with a glorious golden glow. It was summer solstice (June 21), the longest day of the year.

Ironically, on the first day of summer, the good weather pattern ended. It was a grey, subdued day along a very familiar shore all the way into Port Clyde, where we anchored off the ferry dock to Monhegan. The wind had dropped, and rain was forecast. We put up a canvas sun/rain tarp, and enjoyed a somewhat drippy supper of roast beef with all the fixings, including hand-cranked ice cream. Not too shabby, wouldn't you say? But the row ashore

was canceled, which gave me more time to read my book *Tides*, by Jonathan White, a great read, and very much in keeping with my surroundings. Most everybody else escaped into their own little world, staring into their laps, twiddling their smartphones.

The trip was definitely coming to an end as we hit thick fog all the way to Owl's Head Light and to our anchorage just around the corner in Broad Cove. Most everybody seemed talked out, started pre-packing for tomorrow, making phone calls, and having one more last glass of wine or beer.

Early next morning we motored to our dock in Rockland, very matter of fact, tied and cleaned up and got off the boat. End of trip. It always happens very quickly. An exchange of e-mails, a last wave, and everybody drove off in their cars to wherever they had come from. My Nancy was there with a smile, and we did not stop talking till we hit Orono, where our big yellow Lab gave me a huge welcome after my 10-day absence, but also insisted we go for a walk in the park immediately...which we did.

The Greater Picture

What a historic trip, seeing all those windjammer giants, square-riggers and schooners, all in one place. I felt very fortunate having been part of it. And as I found out, the Sail Boston event was only a small part of a much bigger sailing adventure, the Rendez-Vous 2017 Tall Ships Regatta. It all started in Royal Greenwich, UK as a race to Sines, Portugal, and from there to the Canary Islands, then across the Atlantic to Bermuda, where they met up with another group which had raced there from

Charleston, South Carolina. After the big rendezvous on the island, which was getting ready for this year's America's Cup final races (June 17-26), all windjammers raced on to Boston. The final leg would see the fleet race back from Halifax, Canada to Le Havre, France, thus finishing a big circle around the Atlantic. And since the year 2017 is also Canada's 150th birthday, most of the windjammers would sail up there after the Sail Boston event: to Québec City, Charlottetown (Prince Edward Island, the cradle of Canada), to various ports in the Gulf of St. Lawrence as well as Nova Scotia and even Newfoundland.

In mid-August, Nancy and I watched the windjammers come into the harbor of Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, for yet another parade. There were the three large square-rigged barques *Picton Castle*, *Lord Nelson* and *Europa*, as well as the schooners *Blue-nose II*, *Spirit of Bermuda*, *Wylde Swan* and also our Maine schooner *Bowdoin* (plus a few other boats). What a sight! It was Sail Boston all over again for me, and I felt good being able to show Nancy many of the boats I had just seen there.

We got out of Lunenburg, though, before the throngs of people descended on that little, tight, former fishing/ship-building town. I again celebrated the occasion with a home-cooked meal of steamed mussels, washed down with my all-time favorite Canadian beer "La Fin du Monde".

While in the area, I also did a week's worth of solo outriggering on Mahone Bay, a bay filled with 365 islands. You can find it between Lunenburg and Chester, just a tad to the south of Halifax. So, go to Halifax, my

boating friends! You will like this area, "Canada's ocean playground". Happy birthday, Canada! We love you!


Keep sailing/boating! Be safe, be cheerful and enjoy!

For Extra Info

Sail Boston: A special issue of *Marlin-spike*, Summer 2017, Number 15, Salem, Massachusetts, 2017.

Allan Billard: *Port Of Call*, Tall ships visit the Maritimes, Nimbus Publishing, Halifax, Canada, 2017.

Jonathan White: *Tides*, Trinity University Press, San Antonio, Texas, 2017.



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Start of the sailing race.

Return to the MASCF

By Greg Grundtisch

Due to other obligations and family commitments we have been unable to attend this glorious event for seven to eight years. This year at the Mid-Atlantic Small Craft Festival's 34th at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum in St Michaels, Maryland, we finally made our long awaited return, not only to enjoy the Festival but to bring the lovely and talented Naomi's beloved catboat, *Bitty Kat*, the catboat we brought the very first time we attended some 15 years ago.



Some of the Festival attendees have been coming for many years attracted by the great fun this event provides. There are several families that are now attending with their third generation. That says a lot for what this Museum and its very talented and capable staff have been doing every October for 34 years and its appeal is still going and growing.

We arrived on a beautiful Friday afternoon and were very warmly greeted by Mr John Ford and the kind and helpful folks at the registration table. After registration we pulled *Bitty Kat* to the launch area and got all ready to launch. After rolling the trailer to the water's edge we had some helpful volunteers assist us in lifting the catboat off the trailer and into the water. Quick as a cat the boat was in and I was onboard and paddled to the nearest available space to tie up and get rigged and ready for some sailing.

This festival of small craft is a family oriented event, it has plenty for kids and parents to do together as well as events for adults only. The main events are the races, sail, paddle and oar. These are somewhat non traditional as most taking part don't take them too seriously (depending on how you define serious). They are competitive, for sure, but with a lot of good natured non serious banter and bluster.

Saturday is the main day for races and sailing on the beautiful Miles River and protected cove of the Museum. There are dozens and dozens of small boats of all sorts, both traditional and non traditional designs. Most are home built or restored along with others that are common "off the shelf" designs. Saturday evening offers the awards ceremony after dinner and then a guest speaker. There is stargazing and identifying later and some

that gather for some relaxing music playing under the tent.

The events for kids include model boat building and racing in the little pool, a cardboard boat race and a scavenger hunt on Sunday morning. For the adults there are workshops and demonstrations for building, restoring and repairing boats, history talks and discussions, sea chantey singing, astronomical star gazing to name a few.

While Sunday morning finds some informal sailing, a meeting takes place for the volunteers and for those who may want to help out next year. But most, like the lovely and talented Naomi and I, are pulling boats out and preparing for road trips home.

If you have never attended this very special, one of a kind festival, or visited this museum and its beautiful grounds with its extensive collections and exhibits, you are missing out on something you will not find anywhere else. There are many wonderful museums and boating shows and events around the country but this one is special and by far the best of its kind that we have experienced. Held on the first weekend in October every year, it has an easy going relaxed friendly atmosphere with free camping for the weekend and the staff and volunteers are all super nice and helpful to all, especially first time folks. Make plans for next fall you will have one of the most fun and enjoyable time you could ask for.



Boats ashore.



Boats afloat.





The cardboard boat race.



Awards banquet.

Dock talk



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2017 Messabout
“Oh, what a
beautiful day!”

Photos by Carol Jones and Frank Stauss





Double Reefed on Turner's Creek Or Steamships and Crimson Clover: The Float

By Pete Peters

Anyone can have fun when it is 80° and sunny! There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad gear! That's how the emails started after NOAA predicted high winds with gusts to 26 knots and 80% chance of rain. After a two-hour drive from Washington Crossing, we pulled into Molly's Mart in Kennedyville, Maryland. The three cars with Marsh Cats in tow looked like the carnival coming to town. Molly sells the ramp passes. We opted for the \$30 three day pass. If you have no pass at the ramp there is a \$100 fine.

Molly's does not take credit cards unless you buy \$20 of stuff. So cash it was as we were scrutinized by the six mounted antlered deer heads on the wall in the store. Then right on Turner Creek Road and past a farm on which there are 100 acre fields of red blossoms (I looked for the yellow brick road). I found out later these are fields of Crimson Clover used for cattle feed. Quite a surreal sight. "Crimson and Clover" by Tommy James and the Shondells recorded in 1968

came to mind. It has absolutely nothing to do with the plants in the field.

At the end of the road is the ramp and an old steamboat wharf. Prior to good roads and the Annapolis Bay Bridge, the wheat and farm goods from this area were transported to Baltimore via steamship which ran on a regular basis. Today our motley crew of Marsh Cats (4), Handy Cat and Sea Pearl 21 and Navigator shared the ramp with several expensive bass fishing boats. We met Steve Warfle sailing the *Wild Cat*, the Sea Pearl 21, Doug Oelle in *Comfort*, the Marsh Cat, and Kevin Brennen in *Slipjig*, the Navigator. They had all spent the previous rainy blustery night on the Creek.

Winds of 16 knots with gusts to 24 knots met us as we poked out the Creek and headed downwind on the *Sassafrass*. We headed toward the Granary restaurant in Georgetown at the head of the river but sailed up Freeport Creek instead. Beating now upwind in fluky air we rafted up for lunch and a gam. Along

the way, we were met by the curious who lived on the creek. I asked where we should assemble for the July 4th parade of boats. Were we too early? And then after a pause, "What time would you like us over for drinks and dinner? Is six o'clock good for you?" How suddenly entertaining and popular we had become.

Double reefed now, we beat back up the *Sassafrass* against a strong headwind, rafted in Turner Creek and feasted on a variety of one pot meals. There were Hormel noodles, a dehydrated Campmore chicken dish, Campbell's clam chowder, sausage sauerkraut and home fries and a few beers. "If I had a Boat," "15 miles on the Erie Canal" and "Psycho Killer" were sung and sleep came easy.

Sunday brought higher gusts so we sailed among the lily pads in Turner's Creek, then headed for home in the early afternoon. These little boats performed well in high winds but common sense and avoiding stupidity were the order of the day. Double reefed, cold and wet, we didn't need 80° and sunny.



The Adirondack Museum at Blue Mountain Lake, New York, is now called the Adirondack Experience. Marketing is the reason for the change. After a stop at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum earlier on our way home from our summer holiday in Maine, we traveled further west through some beautiful mountain and lake scenery for this “experience.” The grounds are on a mountainside that gently rolls down to Blue Mountain Lake’s shore.

The museum is designed to give an idea of the Adirondack Mountain’s general history as it relates to early logging and forestry and also the area’s recreational development, then and now. There is still logging and milling done in the mountains but tourism and recreation are now the major industries.

The lovely and talented Naomi found the forestry aspect of this museum most interesting and spent much time discussing its current environmental state as it relates to invasive species. Her interest was piqued as we were driving through the Adirondack Park and noticed large stands of dead and dying trees. The gypsy moth, green ash borer and a blight that is now affecting spruce trees were the main topics but there are many different environmental issues that are affecting the trees, lakes, ponds and streams.

My interest was in the boats and boat building that developed in this area then and



ADIRONDACK EXPERIENCE™

The Museum on Blue Mountain Lake

By Greg Grundtisch

now. This was once the location of an event called the “No Octane Regatta” (see August issue, pages 10-11). It was held here for years but suddenly ended. The few people I asked about its demise did not know why it was no longer held. They had heard of it but were new to the “experience” and had not attended any of the regattas. They said they would get an answer for me but we departed before learning the answer.

The grounds have dozens of theme buildings that show early pioneer living, logging camps, cottage life in the early days, logging machinery and tools of the past, photos of the past, to name only a few. Oh yes, there is a large building devoted to the boats and boat building of the region. It was a very

rainy and windy day and I spent much of my time in this building.

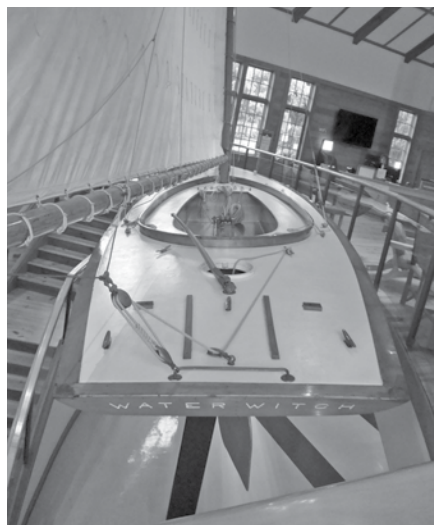
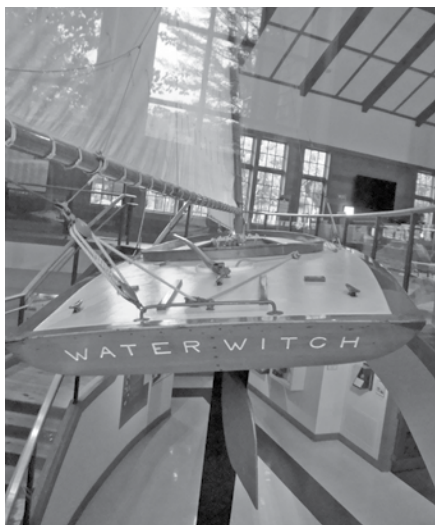
The collection goes back to early native craft, to steam and paddle, to sail and rowing. There are some mahogany outboard runabouts and the like in the collection as well. There are volunteers available for short impromptu tours of the boats as well as answering questions about the boats’ histories and development. There are volunteers available to answer questions in all the other exhibits, too.

This museum experience, as well as the No Octane Regatta, was one we had planned to attend for many years. We were quite impressed with how extensive and expansive, the grounds and facilities are. It would be a fantastic area to row, paddle or sail. The only very slightly negative aspect of the experience we found was that there is limited food and lodging available nearby. But there are some towns with more available motels and restaurants within a 20 to 30 minutes drive. Lake Placid has anything a tourist could want and plenty of very good places to eat along with stunning scenery. And if that isn’t enough, there is the North Pole. Yes, there is a North Pole. It is about seven miles from Lake Placid and Santa and his workshop is there. Yes Virginia? If the museum “experience” doesn’t impress, the surrounding scenery definitely will.



Catboat *Waterwitch* dominating three floors of main entrance lobby is first thing to be seen upon entering museum.

Waterwitch from behind, two views.



A sailing canoe in the main lobby.



The main lobby featuring locally built boats. At left an outboard runabout. At right a Hickman Sea Sled. In rear a steam launch.

Looking at the boats outside the main boat building.





First canoe to be seen upon entering the canoe displays.



Canoe display room.



Three canoes: In foreground a cold molded hull, overhead a Wee Lassie, at right a 100-year-old native Canadian type canvas covered hull.



Dugout canoe in foreground, birchbark canoe inverted overhead.

Canoe camping setup.



An Adirondack Guideboat.



Adirondack Guideboat display.



Closeup of some older guideboats.

Adirondack built rowboats.





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At left, *Wanderer*, a rowing/sailing boat, 17'x42", 203 lbs, built by J.H. Rushton in 1889 in Canton, New York. In center a guideboat. At right, *Helen*, a Lake George rowboat, 18'8"x40", built by R.F. Smith & Sons in 1908.



Skeeter, a gasoline powered inboard speedboat.



A naptha launch, 21'x5'4" built by Gas Engine & Power Co in Morris, New Jersey, in 1910.

El Legarto, a 1923 Gold Cup Racer powered by a Packard engine.



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The Extreme Raid 2016,

by Hubert Bakker

Photographs by the author

Reprinted from *Dinghy Cruising*, Journal of the Dinghy Cruising Association UK

THE EXTREME RAID 2016 IS THE brainchild of Dutchman Koos Winnips. It is a cross-over between a raid (a flotilla event of sailing and rowing boats), and a race. It takes place on the Lauwersmeer in the northernmost part of the Netherlands. The Lauwersmeer is a former estuary with shallow creeks and old fishing villages.

In the past, Winnips used to sail his International Moth on the main lake. Last winter he built a sailing canoe to explore estuaries like the Lauwersmeer. While building the canoe, Winnips developed the idea of a competitive event around the Lauwersmeer for like-minded sailing, canoeing and rowing enthusiasts. Around the Lauwersmeer he put five boxes with token items, like a pair of sunglasses, a child's watch, a paper weight on so on. Each competitor should collect a token from each box in order to earn points. The total distance needed to collect all tokens was estimated at 30 miles (approximately 53km). Every competitor can choose his own weapon, as long as no engines are used. It is a very simple concept. No handicap formulas are used to balance between slower and faster boats.

Winnips launched the idea in January and managed to draw 20 competitors to the event which was held on 3rd September 2016.

The Extreme Raid 2016 was held at Omaha Beach located at Jachthaven Lauwersmeer in Oostmahorn on the west bank of the Lauwersmeer. Both the catamaran club of Omaha Beach and the folks of the yacht harbour

helped to make the event happen. For the price of a good meal you could enter the event, get two nights camping, two breakfasts and join the prize-giving barbecue.

Twenty competitors (about 45 sailors) entered the event, with boats ranging from sailing canoes and dinghies to keelboats and racing catamarans. Sizes went from *TooPhat*, a 3.35m sailing dinghy to a sailing canoe from Bremen of about 8m (called *Hans Drink*). Great things were expected from an i550 sports boat, which unfortunately broke its rudder the day before the start. Competitors came from the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.

After breakfast at the Omaha club house before dawn, the competitors assembled at the harbour office to wait for the starting signal. At daybreak, the horn was sounded and everybody hurried to get afloat.

In the morning calm, one group crossed the Lauwersmeer to collect their first token at 'het Booze Wijf' (nothing to do with booze, just a restaurant called 'The Angry Wife') while the others rowed, paddled and sailed to the lock at Ezumazijl. The catamarans quickly separated from the fleet, leaving the keelboats and the smaller boats behind. Koos Winnips pulled through with his Artemis sailing canoe, while the big German canoe made good progress to Ezumazijl with both sails up and with six crew paddling.

With the fleet split into small groups each competitor sailed his own race. The shallow estuary, bordered by green meadows, provided a beautiful background and

the sky reminded you of the paintings by Ruysdael.

As the catamarans made quick progress, others took a more relaxed approach and enjoyed a cup of coffee or light snacks at the stops.

The crew of the German sailing canoe even had boxes of beer, a bucket of potato salad, and plenty of sausages aboard to keep in shape. When they landed at the island near the Ballastplaat to collect their token, they brought out the gin and tonic and rechristened it the 'Gin and Tonic' island.

As the German sailing canoe took shortcuts, floating in only 20 cm of water, the keelboats had to stick to the waterways or they would run aground. The crew of the Sailhorse keelboat found this out the hard way and got stuck in the mud when they ventured





outside of the channel. Fortunately they quickly got afloat and continued the race without damage.

During the day the wind had freshened to a force 4 from the West. This made the stretch to Zoutkamp a broad reach. With a good upwind boat and good tacking you could sail back to the lake. Others had to paddle or row. The long and winding channel to Lunegat required some tacking as well.

The first catamaran returned at 12:30 with all 5 tokens. Meanwhile some competitors began to tire after 6 hours

into the race. Some decided to call it a day and return with 3 or 4 tokens. However, the majority preferred to battle it out until the end.

Halfway through the afternoon most of the boats returned to the harbour. It was now quite windy, as the crew of *Hans Drink* found out. They had chosen to make 'Het Booze Wijn' their last stop and now had to paddle back to Omaha Beach against a force 5 wind. They made the harbour at 16:45. Julian got stuck at Zoutkamp and had to be brought back.

When everybody was safely back at Omaha Beach it was time to fire up the barbecue and hold the prize giving. Although there were many different boats and people from very different backgrounds there was great camaraderie. The end of a perfect day.

Extreme Raid 2016: A Day on the Water

It is still dark. I am just waking up in our trailer tent. Klarie is still sleeping. Outside I can hear people talking in low voices while preparing for the race. It is nearly 6am. Time to put on some clothes and rig my boat.

I wake Klarie to get up as well. She was talked into crewing on a big sailing canoe from Bremen.

With my headlamp I look for my clothes. I put provisions into a container: muesli bars, water bottles and egg cakes.

Outside I see more headlamps of other sailors preparing themselves for the raid.

In the dinghy park a few boats are already waiting with their rigs up. The catamaran rigs tower over the smaller boats. A Solway Dory is ready for action. Closer to the water, Joost and Viola are rigging their Goat Island Skiff on the trailer. Koos left his sailing canoe



Too Phat

fully rigged on its side. Next is *TooPhat*, my 11-foot dinghy with a Topper rig. After putting the provisions on board I unroll the sail. Then I tie the sail to the boom. It is getting lighter now.

06:00 AM. Time for breakfast. Marion and Benjamin prepared a breakfast buffet in the club house at Omaha Beach. I put some muesli and yoghurt in a carton cup and pour myself a coffee. It is quiet. Some sailors already had breakfast and are now preparing themselves for the race. Others rigged up their boats and are now quietly munching away, pondering if they are finally ready for the event.

At 06:50 Koos Winnips wants to make a move to the assembly point at the harbour office. In a silent procession we follow. We join the sailors who have already assembled at the red-white pole in front of the harbour office. We will have a standing start when the horn is sounded.

We wait for daybreak. Then Koos nods to Marion's daughter to sound the horn. After the signal, we all hurry to our boats.

I quickly get into my wet suit and realize that Klarie is on the German canoe with my sunglasses in her bag. I run back to the harbour and see them paddling away. No sunglasses today. Let's hope that it remains cloudy all day. I walk back to Omaha Beach. Most boats are already in the water. I slide my boat into the water and row away from the shore. Then I sail on a downwind course towards 'het Booze Wijn' at the other side of the Lauwersmeer. In the distance I see the sails of other competitors. Somewhere to the right, the big red sailing canoe with Klarie is disappearing in the direction of Ezumazijl.

I am running at 1.6 knots. Then a puff of wind:

2.3 knots. Behind me I see a red and white spinnaker approaching. It is a Sailhorse keelboat. After a quarter of an hour it is in front of me. I am sailing at 3 knots now. As I get closer to the Booze Wijn, the first boats are already coming back. Alex seems to be leading, Koos is there too sailing his canoe. The crew of the Sailhorse also have collected their token. In front of me Frank van Zoest is steering his yawl into the harbour. At 8am I fasten to a mooring at the outside of the harbour and make my way to the reception. There I find a box.

The tokens are paper weights with a quote from the Canoe Boys: 'The sea wants to know, how big is your heart'. When I walk back, Frank is still looking for the box.

After eating an egg cake I cast off in search of the Zuidelijke Ballastplaat. As I am navigating the small channel between Het Booze Wijn and the main lake I am tacking every 50 metres. Once outside the buoys I run aground. I quickly raise the centerboard and tack. Frank is close behind. Once out of the channel, Frank continues to the dam separating the lake from the Wadden sea. Far in front of me I can see the OK dinghy of Felix. I decide not to follow Frank and continue along the shipping channel in the direction of the Zuidelijke Ballastplaat.

I see a RIB waving at me. That must be Oscar looking after our safety.

After a while the shipping channel bends to the south and we are on a reaching course. The wind has picked up a little and I record 7.7 knots. Even then it is a long trip. The shipping channel bends again and we are running downwind towards the sun. I miss my sun glasses. Then I see an opening in the shoreline. No buoys to mark the depth. So it is probably too shallow to sail through. I continue along the shipping channel. Then another opening, this time marked with buoys.

This must be the channel to the island at the Zuidelijke Ballastplaat. I luff up and see another boat approaching the jetty. It is the big gaff-rigged dinghy of Benjamin and Fred. I tie up to the jetty and make my way to the box. It contains sunglasses. Lucky me! I put the sunglasses over my spectacles. It may look odd but it does the trick. Benjamin and Fred are already gone while I am eating another egg cake and drinking a few sips from my bottle.



Whilly Tern



Koos Winnips, Organiser



Now on to the next stop at Hunzegat, a small harbour before the locks at Zoutkamp. We are running downwind. The lake narrows to a channel winding towards Zoutkamp. Before me are Benjamin and Fred. Koos is already returning from Hunzegat, tacking in front of me. Once more I stick to the shipping channel. On the river banks, cows are standing in the water. It is a beautiful day.

I am closing in on Benjamin and Fred, then a puff of wind puts me in front of them. At Hunzegat I tie *TooPhat* at a jetty and walk to the shop. There a little girl hands me a toy watch from the box. Some fellow competitors are drinking coffee outside the shop. I would like some coffee too but there is no time.

I walk back to the jetty. Benjamin and Fred are already on their way. In the distance I see Joost and Viola tying up their GIS skiff.

As I leave the harbour entrance I cross *Hans Drink*, the big red sailing canoe from Bremen. Klarie waves. I wave back. In front of me Benjamin and Fred are short-tacking up the channel. With each tack I am closing in and finally I can overtake them. Then onto the lake and from there to Lunegat for my fourth token. I forgot to set a new waypoint and have overlooked the channel to Lunegat.

In the distance I see Oostmahorn. Benjamin and Fred are nowhere to be seen. No other raid boats in sight. I head back in the direction of Lunegat.

Goat Island Skiff



As we are reaching to Lunegat, I recognize an Optimist sail at a jetty. It belongs to one of the German canoes. Its owner is probably tired of the trip back from Lunegat. The channel bends and we are sailing upwind. It is still wide enough to make good progress. There is one of the folding canoes. It is Eckhard returning from Lunegat.

The channel is getting narrower and narrower and I am spending more time tacking than sailing. Then we are at the jetty outside the harbour. A lady helps me tie *TooPhat* to the jetty.

The box is outside the harbour master's office. The prize: two glass marbles with statuettes of animals inside. When I return from the toilets I bump into Benjamin and Fred again. They have decided that this

is their last stop. As it is 14:30 they don't expect to make it to Ezumazijl and then finish in time. Good point.

I cast off to return to the Lauwersmeer. It is easy sailing: a bit of running, a bit of reaching.

When I reach the entrance of the channel to Ezumazijl I decide to take a risk and go for the fifth token. It takes some time to shift from sailing to rowing mode. A tug is approaching, they seem to think I am in trouble. I wave that I am OK. Then I start rowing to Ezumazijl.

After a while I cross Eckhard who is just returning from Ezumazijl. It is still 600m to Ezumazijl. At last I reach a little harbour. I walk to the bench at the lock and put my fifth token in the box. A lolly this time.

It is 15:53. I must hurry to get back to Oostmahorn in time. We are running downwind through the channel. I reckon the wind has gone down to a force 3. We get to the Lauwersmeer. Now it is upwind to Oostmahorn. A little more wind would be welcome. I am tired and in a hurry. I make some bad tacks, must be nerves or tiredness. It is now 16:59. No chance to get to the beach in time.

Eventually I make it to Omaha Beach at 17:12 hours. I drag the boat onto the beach and run to the club house. I get to sound the gas horn as I am the last finisher. Since I finished outside the time limit I must return two tokens.

Koos congratulates me with being the smallest boat in the event. People talk about their day on the water. Everyone has enjoyed the event.

My back hurts. I lower myself into a chair holding a cold beer in my hands. Life is good. ||||

Hansdrink



25 Years Ago in **MAIB**



SOMETHING ABOUT BOAT CAMPING

By Jim Michalak

A few years ago the State of Illinois built a hotel which looks over one of the large man-made lakes there. Folks get to walk in the woods and see the beautiful sunsets for \$60 a night. For years I'd been doing that for free. I could even relocate my waterfront property at will. I was boat camping.

There's nothing new about boat camping. Right after the Civil War, Nathaniel Bishop spent months circumnavigating the eastern U.S. in a 14 foot canoe (which he rowed most of the way) and in a duck hunter's sneakbox. Modern boat campers can be every bit as ambitious as Bishop, but I'm going to propose something less strenuous for the common man. It's more of a first step that you can build upon.

To me boat camping is simply camping in a boat. L. Francis Herreshoff called this "beach cruising" and was a great fan of it even though he made a living designing yachts for millionaires. The design he called his Beach Cruiser, a 14 foot dinghy, shown on page 88 of his *The Complete Cruiser* has the basics which I've tried to stick into my little sailboats.

Foremost is a spot big enough to sleep in. That is a clear space 6-1/2' by 2', but I've camped on the floor of a solo canoe whose bottom plank was only 11 inches wide. My air mattress pretty well filled the canoe. I had to get up and out of the boat at night to roll over (Nat Bishop had the same problem), but I was able to spend the night sleeping, more or less.

For camping two you'd think a space of 6-1/2' by 4' would be required, even though the double bunks of some yachts are smaller than that. My first real camping boat was a Bolger Jinni, a flat bottomed yawl, 16' long and specifically designed for camping with a 6-1/2' by 4' flat cockpit floor. The wife and I camped in the Jinni quite a bit but it's chummy. It's like those "two man" tents that are great for one. If you want to sleep two men, better get a "four man" tent. I should tell you sleeping head to foot makes for less interference of sleepers. Better wash your feet before turning in! Maybe a 13' by 2' clear space is better. Sleep foot to foot.

Not too many small boats have this kind of

clear floor space, although it's fairly easy to design if you're starting from scratch with a new drawing. Seats must either be removable or eliminated. It's best to eliminate all frames in the camping area. You may need to increase the size of the wales and thicken the floor to compensate for the lack of framing. I made an old Teal skiff suitable for camping by adding another 1" x 2" lamination to its wale and taking a saw to the center frame that was blocking my sleeping space. The modified boat was better all around; no heavier than before but just as rigid and with a wide open center. And that is another benefit of a camping style design -- an open playpen of a cockpit that is very pleasant to use even when you're not camping. A camper which sleeps one has room to daysail two, sleeps two will daysail four, etc...

For a sailboat the use of leeboards, external daggerboards or external pivoting boards will eliminate the clutter caused by a centerboard or daggerboard case. These leeboards may be ugly from the observer's point of view, but from the user's point of view they are efficient, out of sight, and out of mind.

You can't have a large external keel or V-bottom because you need to beach the boat flat, as Herreshoff did. He used inflatable tubes as rollers to bring his dinghy up to dry beach. For solo camping a suitable boat might weigh 100 pounds or less and rollers aren't really needed. I never could find rollers and they might just sink out of sight in the mud we have here anyway. For heavier boats, such as my Jinni, I'd pull the bow as far up on shore as possible. Usually the hull is about half in and half out of the water. It's all I can do but has real disadvantages compared to a totally beached boat.

For one, getting out of the sleep space requires climbing over the bow (or stern -- sometimes it is best to beach stern first) and often a step into the mud. Being able to step straight over the side onto dry land, as you can from a totally beached boat, is perhaps the biggest advantage of this sort of camping. Once ashore, even a twelve footer has more "deck space" than the largest yacht.

And it's solid deck, too. There's no pitching and rolling to contend with, but that's not true with a half beached boat. One night I had Jinni half beached on a quiet lee shore to our southerly summer winds. During the night a north wind blew in bringing choppy waters which made noisy slaps against the hull and physically lifted and dropped the stern onto the bottom every few seconds. For me there was no sleeping in it and I tied a pocket hammock between two trees for the night. I came back a month later and found the beavers had eaten my hammock trees.

A totally beached boat can be pulled up high enough to avoid worries about waves and tides. We don't have tides where I live but I've seen the lakes go up and down several feet a day and the rivers a foot an hour. I once had a Birdwatcher tucked onto a shore and settled in for the night. About 5 AM I awoke to do some business and found myself far more disoriented than normal. The lake had her and I was drifting free a quarter mile from my camp site. Luckily there was almost no wind. Even a half beached boat needs to be tied down.

I prefer a hull with a plain bottom plank armored with fiberglass and with no rub strakes, external or internal stiffeners or even a skeg, if possible. A light flat bottom hull with good rocker can be slid over mud, sand, grass and gravel like a sled. Bottoms like this usually have poor directional stability in the water and need a little help from a leeboard to go straight. Canoes and rowboats always seem to need at least a skeg to go straight.

And don't underestimate the ability of a canoe or rowboat for boat camping. In fact, I maintain that a light rowboat is the optimum. For \$150 a hull such as my Roar or a Bolger Dory can be built, which has the clear space needed to sleep one plus enough storage volume in the ends to keep all your gear on board while you sleep. They will weigh perhaps 75 pounds empty if you keep weight in mind while building. They are a snap to solo cartop or slide around on a beach. There is no sail rig to build or stow. In truth, once you've got rowing down, these boats will take you almost anywhere faster and safer than a sailboat. Admittedly, if I lived on the Gulf Coast and could sail the protected waterway on a reach for months at a time, I'd have a sailing camper. On narrow streams I'd have a canoe. Once you get involved in this, you'll have one of each!

You know, people who "anchor out" can miss a lot. Late one afternoon I saw a ski boat, very low in the water, quickly pull up near my spot. The worried skipper had with him a crew of three young lovelies all wearing those tiny tight things young women swim in. The captain immediately repaired to the stern and suffered to find the leak. I was going to help until I saw his beautiful crew bailing the boat, straining this way and that with buckets and hopping and bouncing to and fro. For a final performance they all three bent low and, with every muscle in perfectly poised prominence, thrust the heavy boat free of the shore. I was satisfied just to watch. It was better than TV.

No matter how you beach, never take a conventional tent, I say. Where I live setting up a tent will bring out the shore patrol in seconds and you'll be sent home. You see, I'm not certain boat camping is totally legal except in unusual areas like the Land Between the Lakes in Kentucky/Tennessee. I suspect the entire world has a "No Camping Except In Designated Areas" rule. And the fact is that if everybody did it, I'd stop doing it. To me boat camping is a getaway, somewhat non-social in



Opposite page: My little sailing jonboat, "Piccup Squared" with lugsail rigged for shelter. Above: Just the basics here, a 13' "Toto" canoe with air mattress, sleeping bag and bug net at the ready. The original Bolger "Jinni" camper shown here with rig stowed on crutches on a windless summer day. The "Jinni" rebuilt with a walk-through cabin and offset mast ala "Birdwatcher". The cuddy is just long enough to lie down in and just high enough to sit up in.



nature. So I'm secretive and discreet about it. If I've spent a night camping in my boat and nobody else knows it or can tell I was there, I've had a success. Just the same, I'm in the habit of having a valid fishing license and some minimal fishing gear such as a telescoping fishing pole. Sitting on shore and fishing all night is totally legal and so is snacking and boiling a pot of coffee.

"Just fishing," I'll tell the agent.

"Good luck," he'll reply. "But don't fall asleep. That's illegal!"

Hiding the sleeping bag and air mattress may not be easy. A good air mattress is a wonder of modern times. Every bit as comfortable as a real bed to me. I think the best ones are rubberized canvas. Mine is a "Winnebago" manufactured in Yugoslavia. Actually, you can sleep on your boat cushions and life jackets and you'll have them along anyway. Sponge the floor clean and let it dry before putting down your mattress. You're setting your bed on the boat's floor, unworried about sticks and stones

beneath. Crawling creatures are effectively blocked by the bottom. But I once parked Jinni over a crawfish hole. All night I heard the crawfish clawing at the bottom of the hull trying to get out of his hole. Sort of like an old horror movie.

Ah, critters! The big furry kind have never been a problem. The only trouble I ever had was when three raccoons, in the middle of a noisy family fight, tried to board the Jinni one night. Some shouting and flashing of lights sent them away, arguing all the more among themselves. Don't lie awake thinking deer will be grazing next to your boat. Let's face it, hunters lash themselves to treetops and douse themselves with fox pee just to see one.

It's the tiny critters you'll see a lot of. If I were an entomologist I'd do a lot of boat camping. I think I could discover a hundred new species a night in the summer. I'd slide a canoe into the tall shore weeds and when it was half full of bugs, maybe an hour or so, I'd pack them off to the University. Originally I didn't allow for bugs and effectively never slept. Then I tried bug spray and still effectively never slept. It seems they know to avoid the sprayed areas and go straight for the lips, eyelids, nostrils and ear canals, and if you think I'm kidding, you're wrong. You're almost better off letting them bite you and go home happy customers than to have them buzz your ears all night. The trouble is that they tell their many friends. So I got a bug net at a discount store. Works great! Sometimes I don't need the bug spray but I take it along just in case. The net needs no frame to be effective. Just lay it loosely over you like a sheet. On summer evenings the net is often warm enough to eliminate the need of a sleeping bag.

Ah, the sleeping bag! I bought a new one years ago and it looked so fluffy I saw no need to take the air mattress. Laying directly on the floorboards, the fluff mooshed down to nothing. Not only was there no cushion, but the slick nylon bag kept sliding downhill on the somewhat canted floor. Another sleepless night. For summer camping I'm not at all certain a sleeping bag is required. A heavy sheet or bug net may be all you need for warmth. One fluffy sleeping bag can take up as much volume as all the other gear combined and, in some boats like a solo canoe, the storage volume is precious. If the temperature gets below 60 degrees, you'll need a bag but you don't need an expensive one. Camping in really cold weather is a hardship I avoid. Get a sleeping bag with synthetic filler which still works when wet.

And what if it rains? My advice to beginners is never camp on a rain forecast. Since I got a NOAA radio years ago, I've never been caught out in an overnight rain, but it will happen someday and I'll get wet. I've tried boat tents in the past. The first was a low, tight fitting affair for my little Teal. I used it one 40 degree night and spent the evening dreaming about how cold I was. With no ventilation, the inside was damp and miserable. For Jinni, I made an open ended job with six feet of headroom. It worked very well stretched from stem to stern set on a sprit boom as a ridge pole. One warm summer night my wife and I got caught in a good rain which didn't bother us at all. Next morning I rowed back to the ramp in the rain with the tent still up (no wind), oars sticking out under the tent, and wife watching out the bow opening directing me. Now I carry the tent but don't put it up unless it really starts raining. It restricts movement, and, worst of all, my view of nature which is why I'm camping in the first place.

My Piccup Pram and its several related cousins sail with a balanced lug rig which can be set up as a shelter. Herreshoff suggested this for his Beach Cruiser. It works surprisingly well in showers as he said it would. It won't stand a tornado, I fear, but it's there for you if you need it.

I haven't done it yet, but I think a good tent could be rigged for rowboats using the oars as tent poles. Use a light nylon tent fly material. It is supple enough to fold compactly and be quiet in the wind. The blue poly tarps are cheap and waterproof but are hard to fold and make a racket in a wind. I've tried it -- another sleepless night. Your tent will stay tight in almost any wind if you secure it with shock cord like they do real tent covers. In fact, a quick shelter might just be a self-supporting tent fly like that of a Eureka Timberline tent, for example.

I suppose a Birdwatcher type boat is the best rain camper. You can even sail or row it covered over. I designed a plywood cuddy cabin sixteen footer with a walkthrough roof similar to Birdwatcher, but smaller and much cheaper. I modified my old Jinni to test the notion and it works well. Leave off the hatches in good weather and cover the walkway with a bug net at night. If it rains, you can pop the hard top into place in a minute. That original sixteen footer, called Pencilbox, is under construction by a man who wanted to keep his kids safely corralled in the open topped cuddy and didn't care a damn about camping.

Well, if we've fooled the rain, I'll suggest some other weather parameters. Keep within them until experience allows you to expand them. Our large shallow lakes white cap in 10 to 15 mph winds and make rough and even dangerous going for smaller boats. 40 degrees is too cold. 90 degrees is getting too hot and will greatly increase your drinking water requirements.

Take 2-1/2 gallons of water per person per day. I've found it to be enough, including cooking and a bit of washing. For a one day trip I use an insulated jug of that amount. In the summer I'll put in ice to the top, add water, and it stays cold for a day. I drop in cans of my favorite beverages and they stay icy cold just like in a beer commercial. I'm refreshed just thinking about it.

I've also started taking along a little percolator for coffee. It makes three cups of the real stuff in five minutes on my little stove.

For a stove, get a backpacker's one burner job that uses standard propane bottles. I have an excellent little butane stove that I've used for years but the butane bottles are now available only by writing to the Queen of Jupiter. These things don't always work well in really cold weather and you're supposed to sleep with the fuel bottles to keep them warm. No kidding. I would avoid any stove requiring gasoline. Don't get a pressurized kerosene job. I've got one and it's a beauty. It roars like a Saturn rocket and I've abandoned it several times thinking it was about to explode on the launch pad, which it hasn't done yet. I wouldn't dream of using it in a boat. It belongs at Cape Canaveral.

Get a little set of aluminum pots and dishes like the Boy Scouts use. If it comes with an aluminum drinking cup, throw that cup away and get a plastic one unless you like burning your lips.

For food, start with a bag of doughnuts for breakfast. Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches work for lunch. If you're gonna cook, avoid anything requiring refrigeration. I like pasta and cheese, self-contained in a box. Just boil the pasta and mix in the cheese. Canned stew is

good too if you can digest it. If you're gonna be out all day, think in terms of 2500 calories a day. You don't want to be hungry. But for the first timer, I suggest eating a big meal before camping, setting up camp in the evening before dark and just skip cooking. Then hit the doughnuts and coffee for breakfast and get off the lake before the water skiers wake up (about noon) and into a restaurant. At the restaurant, take into account that you probably look and smell bad.

I'm suggesting the first timer keep his boat camping experience brief because he may not get much sleep. Until you're used to camping in the rough, your senses may be overwhelmed by strange noises. Earplugs help a lot and I'm very serious about this. You would think that after the skiers have finally run out of gas and the yachters out of firecrackers that it would be nice and peaceful, and sometimes it is. But on a calm night you'll hear a new set of noises -- an interstate highway miles away, or a railroad you never knew of. In Southern Illinois it's coal mines and well drills with huge diesel engines. Crickets chirp, frogs croak, fish splash, owls hoot and coyotes howl. Furry things scamper through the woods around you. And around sunrise you may hear early fishermen proceed through a litany of sincere oaths aimed at starting balky outboards. Yes, I've awakened to that too. You can't keep the noise out by shutting the door, but you can shut your ears.

Had I done so, I might have missed a fiasco years ago when I was awakened by the roar of an engine and the flashing of headlights. The nearest road was a half mile away, at least, but these fellows were determined to carve a new one through the brush at midnight. Luckily they were on the opposite side of a small inlet from me. Their vehicle sank to the axles in mud and that alone saved them from going into the drink. They divided up their beer and headed back down their new road to seek a wrecker. I didn't wait for their return but rowed out into the pitch black stump filled inlet to another sight.

It pays to have your gear set up so you can relocate quickly. Another time I camped in a tiny canoe on a closed off abandoned campground. Or so I thought. While cooking noodles and watching the sun set, I couldn't ignore the

whine of huge engines ranging through the old grounds, now overgrown with trees and brush. Closer and closer they came until there was no doubt in my mind that I was about to get run over. The Army had chosen this place and time to hold maneuvers! As they roared by in full gear with guns dangling, they all waved to the guy sitting in his little boat boiling supper. I relocated quickly before dark. Paddling a tiny canoe in the dark feels like floating through deep space and seems about as safe.

After dark I like to stare into deep space a lot and read a little. A small book with big print is nice. I always take two light sources. I suppose a flashlight is handiest but they don't always work. A little fluorescent tube job is best for reading and area lighting, but they don't always work. I've tried a little candle lantern but it was very expensive and gives little light. It's very compact. Refill candles are special order from the Queen of Jupiter. My favorite light is the old fashioned kerosene lantern. It's bulky but cheap and always works. Bring at least two lighters but never start a campfire.

Take a change of clothing along. One nice thing about summer camping is that no bulky clothing is needed. In cold weather bulky clothes can become a limiting factor in your camp. Also, exhausting a supply of dry clothes in wet conditions can be downright dangerous.

Don't forget the toilet paper. Keep it in a waterproof bag like a zip lock. You go discreetly in the woods. Watch out for the bears. They go there too, we think.

Well, I'm at the end and I hope I haven't discouraged you. It's really simple and requires little hardship if done properly. The less gear you take the more you'll enjoy it. Something interesting happens almost all the time. First, try boat camping by yourself or with someone equally fanatic, at least until you get your gear figured out and you can sleep or are used to not sleeping. Don't ever drag along someone who hates roughing it. Not only will they be repulsed forever, but you'll likely find the experience repulsive, too. However, if someone notices your satisfied fanaticism and wants to come along, by all means give it a go. Explain to them that there's no cable TV. For that they need \$60 at the State's new hotel.

Of course "Birdwatcher" is something of an ultimate for boat camping.



In the 1930's Annapolis was sometimes called Crab Town, a name some Annapolitans considered a bit disparaging. It was, after all, the Capital of Maryland, the site of the US Naval Academy and St Johns College. It has some of the finest examples of Georgian architecture which put its founding well back into Colonial times.

On a humbler level, Annapolis could also take pride in oysters and crabs and the work boats that brought them in. The oysters were dredged by skipjacks or tonged by deadrisers. The crabs were caught on trotlines or later in traps. The skiffs worked along the shores of the creeks dipping soft crabs,

The larger working sail craft, the schooners, bugeyes and skipjacks, came into the basin at Annapolis during the weekends or anchored off it. Many deadrisers, V-bottom, narrow boats often powered with car engines, were there any weekday in increasing numbers, gradually taking over the place of smaller sailing work boat of earlier times.

The latter were deadrisers with center boards and a single mast. Among them were also the working log canoes with masts well forward with single sails. These were once quite common. I knew five of them left rotting at the head of the creeks along with larger wornout schooners, skipjacks or bugeyes. Sunk, or on the mud, they slowly disintegrated.

As a boy I rowed over or around them, looking down at centerboard trunks, floor timbers, deck beams and sections of deck and side planking. I loved these abandoned boats and the boats which had survived as working oyster dredge boats or the skipjacks.

Around 1965 I found what was perhaps the last working log canoe afloat. It had a mast and rig, could have been bought for \$200, about a month's pay for me in my teaching job. I had to pass it up.



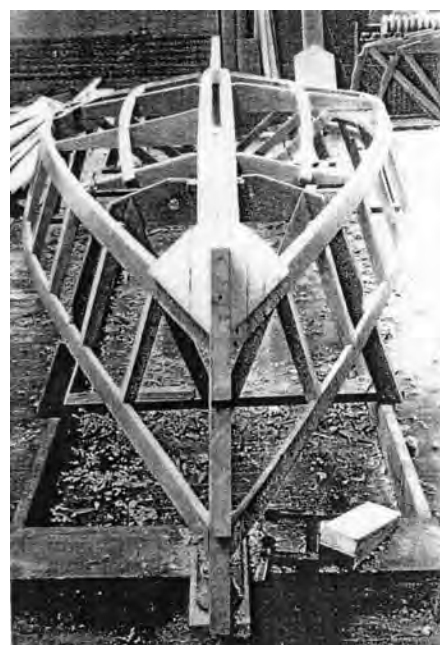
Grave Yard, abandoned bateau—A. Audrey Bodine, *Baltimore Sun*

Skiff upside down under construction. Cedar bottom planks, white pine side planking, oak keel and transom—Will Ansel



Running a Trotline from a Chesapeake Bay Crabbing Skiff or Bateau

By Will Ansel



Skiffs under construction, 1970s. The pine blocking in the forefoot joins keel, chine log and stem—Will Ansel



Crabbing skiff with removable cuddy. Hooks and eyes secure it—Will Ansel

Years later I built my first scaled down skipjack followed eventually by five more. The boats had certain construction features that were unique. The solid block in the forefoot is hewn to shape. Keel, stem and chine logs are joined by the block. The keel is fastened to the underside, the stem is fastened to the raked forward end and the chine log lies on the top at the block. The chine lands about 6" above the keel. Finally rabbets cut in the block receive side and bottom planks.

I had to think through anew how these all fit together with each subsequent boat. Attempts to clarify with sketches were not helpful. The blocks may have been the last vestige of log canoe construction. Another related construction feature was the twist in the bottom planks as they approached the block. Amidships the cross planking of the bottom planks were herringbone fashion, tending aft. They were laid square across as planking moved forward. To achieve fits on the keel and chine near the block, a twist was hewn in thicker bottom planks.

The chine log itself provided a welcome discovery. Laid flat it was dead straight, sprung around the molds it had a beautiful sweep in profile because of the flair in the sides.

Otherwise construction was much like building a sharpie. The making of the clipper bow with the long head, trail boards and bowsprit was pure pleasure.

I sailed the first boat and thought of crabbing from it. Crabbing seemed the proper way to use the boat, keep occupied during summer and perhaps make some money or at least provide crabs to eat. In exchange for some carpentry work on his deadrise a waterman taught me how to run a trotline. I bought a crabbing license and with my 11-year-old son Walter we became commercial crabbers.

Later after the summer of crabbing came a realization that it had all been done before. I discovered Howard Chapelle's plans of scaled down skipjacks he called "crab skiffs or bateaus." Topping that, Audrey Bodine, photographer for the *Baltimore Sun* had photographed them. They had all the features I admired in the oystering dredge boats or skipjacks which led to my building of smaller versions. Chapelle's were used for oyster tonging as well as crabbing.

They were V-bottomed boats with centerboards. The proportions of the hulls followed those of the oystering skipjacks with a beam a third of the length of the hull. They

had clipper bows and long heads and were rigged as were the skipjacks with well raked masts, a leg of mutton sail and jib. His plans showed very beautiful boats 10' or more shorter than the skipjacks oystering. My boats were about 5' or more shorter.

The "crab bateau" Chapelle documented probably tonged for oysters as well as crabbed. The crabbing they did was by running a trot-line, like I did. I used an outboard engine. One of the Chappelle plans shows an aperture for an inboard, they too may have used an engine. Running a trotline under sail would have been beyond our ability.

The equipment for the trotline is direct and simple. Most important is the line itself which was made specifically for crabbing. It was hemp, three stranded, loosely laid, tarred. It was sold at Sadlers hardware store by the Basin. Sadlers stocked wares for the watermen such as galvanized boat nails, galvanized pumps, Manila line, galvanized cleats, blocks, oars, boat hooks, crab nets and wooden bailers gouged out of a single piece of pine. There was nothing of plastic and little of bronze. Galvanized chain and anchors, fisherman type, thimbles and shackles were also sold at Dawes.

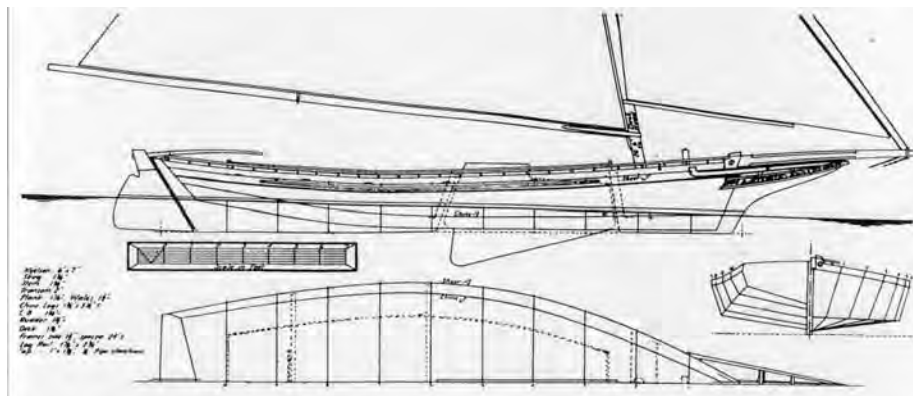
The crabber made or modified what he bought to suit his needs of other equipment. First the crabnet, a hoop with a twine bag at the end of the pole was modified for trotlining. Chicken wire replaced the twine in the hoop. The wire was formed into a shallow basket inside the hoop. The crabs became entangled in the twine hoop slowing the operation. Dipping and emptying the crabs had to be fast and continuous when trotlining.

The roller the trotline passed over was a piece of gear made by the crabber. Mine was made of six 1" thick wooden disks held together with screws. The outer disks had greater diameters to provide rims. The four inner disks made a drum wide enough for the eel bait to pass over with the line. The roller turned on a rod mounted on something like an anchor's cat projecting out on the starboard quarter.

Walter baiting trot line—*Erik Cederblom*



Bateau with rig removed for crabbing. (Audrey Bodine, *Chesapeake Bay and Tidewater*, Bodine and Associates 1954.



Plans and notes on Crabbing Bateau (Howard Chapelle, CBMM 1979). One of the older and smaller crabbing bateau. She was built by a skillful carpenter, probably about 1900. Lines taken off at Lower Hoopers Island August 19, 1942. Length, rabbet to taffrail is 22'6", beam 7'8", draft at skeg 1'2 1/2".

Sketch of Skiff or Bateau. (Will Ansel)





Setting the trot line. Note roller on starboard quarter—*Erik Cederblom*



Running down the trot line I am backing up Walter—*Erik Cederblom*

Walter minding those claws. Note glove and crab measuring gauge on the side deck—*Erik Cederblom*



Walter backing me up. He has crabs in his net. None in mine—*Erik Cederblom*



The crabber also made a gauge to measure 7" across the crab's shell, point to point, the legal size. He also collected bushel baskets, a boat hook for snagging the trot line, two anchors, two short lengths of chain, two buoys and a pot for course salt.

I had bought a British Seagull 40 Plus engine for the boat. This mounted on a bracket on the stern ran us along the crab line at a speed right for dipping. The engine, now 50 years old, is still in my possession, still running at the same noise level and speed.

For baiting the trotline we bought salted eel. We cut it in 3"-4" lengths, unlaid the crab line at 5'-6' intervals putting a piece of eel between the opened strands which we then twisted back tight. The line was coiled into the bushel baskets. This could be done on the way under sail to and from our crabbing spot.

A word on crabs, in the Chesapeake they are simply crabs. Elsewhere they are sometimes called "blue crabs." The crabs go through cycles as they grow. The exoskeletons are discarded, shed, as they grow out of them. The names for the crabs at different stages of growth are peelers, soft crabs, paper shells, hard crabs. The crabs which are in edible stage are either soft or hard. The crabs caught on the crab line are hard crabs, the stage in which they spend most of their lives. They swim, eat and mate as hard crabs.

If one looks at the crab's underside, the sex is obvious from the shape of the shell plate. The female has a rounded broad center plate, the male's is long and narrow. When we trot lined we took both males and females.

Peelers were sometimes caught and kept because they would soon shed and become a much more marketable soft crab. Soft crabs were generally caught by men in skiffs poking around roots of the trees, dock pilings and other places safe for the helpless soft crabs. When I was a boy soft crabs brought \$2 a dozen.



Skiff beating out.

The trotline crabbers, Walter and myself, left the dock and sailed down Mill Creek. We baited the line and coiled it into a bushel basket if it had not been done and left salted from previous trip. We crabbed at the mouth of one of the creeks entering White Hall Bay, a bay north of the Severn River around Greenbury Point. Many other creeks entered the Bay besides our Mill Creek.

At the end of the trotline was a short length of chain to keep it on the bottom, a light anchor and a line up to a buoy. They were at each end of the 100 yard line. The first anchor was set in about 10' of water near the mouth of the creek. The baited line was paid out as the Seagull engine ran us across. The other end of the line with its chain anchor and buoy was set at the far end. We ran back to the first anchor, cut the engine, laid about for a quarter of an hour letting the crabs find the eels and start eating them and hanging on with their claws.

Looking around the Bay White Hall, once a colonial governor's mansion, was in sight to the north. Near the mouth of one of the creeks was *Finisterre* and a Rozinante yawl.

We waited for the crabs to get a hold. Then we pulled up the line from the buoy, put it over the roller and started the run along the line on the engine. Walter and I took turns, one steering the other at the bow dipping the crabs as they came near the surface hanging onto the eel. The chicken wire net in the hoop allowed quick catching and dumping of the crabs. The action had to be fast, they let go if you hesitated in the swoop with the net. Sometimes these were doubles, two at the bait.

Walter caught far more than I did. He went for every one. If we saw something white coming up, it was the face or underside of a crab and we had to act fast. I was slower trying to decide if it was a 7" keeper. He went for them all, sweeping them out with the net, swinging the net aboard into one of the bushel baskets in one swoop, then going for the next. He soon had them running all over the floorboards, all sizes waving their claws, in and out of the baskets.

The crabs ate the eels down to the backbones as we made runs along the line. Finally the catch tapered off and ended crabbing for the day. We pulled in the gear and picked off the boards the escaped crabs which met the legal limits and tossed them into the baskets.

Then we put up the sails and headed for Mill Creek and the dock. While one of us steered, the other coiled the line into the basket, replacing the chewed up eels. Then we "salted back" all the bait, which meant rubbing the eels with salt, pickling them for the next day.

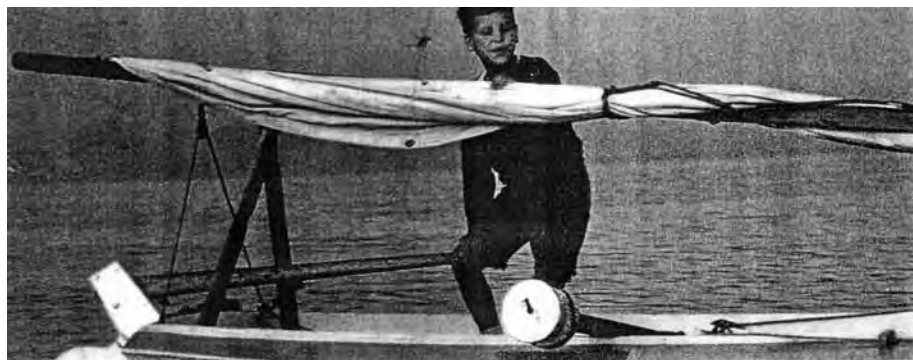


Hard crabs—*Erik Cederblom*

Marketing hard crabs in the '60s in the Chesapeake was no way to affluence. We took the crabs to a buyer who, complaining about the size of crabs, gave us \$5 for a bushel. However, we had plenty of crabs to eat which we steamed with Old Bay Seasoning from Baltimore, washed down with National Bohemian beer, also from Baltimore. All part of our Maryland summers.

The waterman who taught me how to run the trotline truly said, "Eating crabs is like eating peanuts, hard to stop."

On the engine heading home. Note the roller—*Erik Cederblom*



Salting the bait on the line after day's crabbing—*Erik Cederblom*

Sailing back. We generally sailed out to where we set the trotline and used the engine running down the line crabbing. (Erik Cederblom)



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One Month After

When Hurricane Harvey showed up here it disrupted many lives along the Gulf Coast. While we had left, we were still here in our minds, and when we returned in real time the tasks of recovery were all consuming. When I started thinking again of sailing, I knew progress was being made so I once again went sailing. I took the little *Red Top*, my 12' Lehman, went south to see the view from the water of Harvey's wake. From a distance I could see the first house on the outlying islands was gone, just posts remaining. Sailing yet further south on the ICW before heading out across the flats to a cut into the bigger bay, Aransas Bay, through a channel that would be tricky if the markers were missing, water being murky, the markers were, thankfully, still in place.

The actual cut was much wider and deeper, how much deeper I found out while chasing down a treasure on the shore. Stepping out and pushing off, I found the sand along the edge of the cut was gone, I never touched bottom.

The wind was southeast, 15-16mph the weatherman said. As I sailed away from the cut across the shoals out into the bay, soon the remains of the second house were visible as well. I'd call this a good scouring by Mother Nature except for the amount of debris left everywhere.

When we were chased out of Rockport four weeks ago I took with me my carving tools and some wood with the resulting product to be for my daughter Rebecca and her husband Conner. Looks like it will be arriving around Christmas. I'd tell you all what it is, but then that would spoil the surprise.

Third Time

The third time I went sailing since Harvey blew through the area will also be the last of counting the times anyway. That stuff gets old fast. There was a Sea Fair going on up at the Rockport Beach area so I thought I'd sail north from Cove Harbor and take a look see from the water. The wind from the north was light with a promised strength increasing through out the afternoon. Linda canceled the noon lunch with the kids so off I went. I was hoping to get far enough north to ride the same norther back down with the hoped for increase in wind speed.

It worked as promised by the Weather Underground website, thank you very much. As an added bonus, with the water being high I figured I could go a bit further north and come back along the beach, getting in close, real close. The beach being nearly empty and with the increase in depth of water I was able to get up to within about 15' off the beach. It was pretty cool. What normally was ankle deep was now knee deep and with both leeboards up it was a real gas.

Thinking that had I been doing such in California the federalies would have swooped down upon me, this was pretty neat. Sailing past the only three people using the beach, husband, wife and their child, sharing a very short conversation as I sailed past, I learned this morning just who these three

Meanderings Along the Texas Coast

By Michael Beebe

were, employees working on a house owned by one of the coffee regulars at the office, small world.

Sailing back to Cove was a downhill ride, one which I had to be mindful of just where I was, distancewise, off the beach. The sun was setting and now shining in my eyes making the many piers, between the city beach and Cove Harbour that had been blown asunder with too many piles just below the waters surface, hard to see.

It was a good sail all in all. The Lehman 12' is a fine little craft, does this area just fine. I'm thinking of removing the lead in her belly and replacing it with water ballast, ballast that can be removed or added to depending upon wind strength. A bit much too involved some might say. I've learned to listen politely and go my way. I also learned that if I were to listen to the many programmed OSHA thinkers of today, they'd have me doing all my sailing from an armchair or with the multitude I'm trying to get away from.

Sailing back into Cove I got two compliments on the little gal, the second being the memorable one. A young boy, 8 or 10, who had just came in ahead of me with his dad on their powerboat, walked down the dock asking to look at my boat, said it was nice. "Sure, go ahead," I said to the young man. In relating this incident to my wife I told her, "I set the hook." I had showed him how it was set up for sleeping out at the local islands and told him to "climb aboard, if you like, while I go get my trailer." He did and I did. Afterwards, climbing into his dad's truck he looks over and waved, saying, "Thank you."

Went Out

Went out again with the *Red Top* on a beautiful morning, left the dock about 9:30am. Nary a zephyr, I thought I'd have to paddle out of the harbour so that is how I started, then a ghost of a breeze came up and we gurgled along quiet as could be. The forecast wind was to hit 20mph about noon, I was trying to get to the other end of Mud Island, didn't make it. I did get to Mud Island, shy about a quarter mile from my chosen spot.

I noticed a cut left wide open from Hurricane Harvey, what used to be a foot wide is now 20 yards or so. I considered that route but with the expected winds I didn't need any surprises, they came about 20 minutes later. The wind speed increased faster than I had ever experienced. Checked time and gust when I got home, it had been hitting a bit more than 30mph. I decided to anchor off or just beach the girl. I also had a new stove I wanted to try, a Triage from Sweden. When I had things set, knowing the anchor would hold, I brewed myself a cup of coffee. Set up so as prevent any burns, the new stove worked great, steady as can be, even in the rocking and rolling.

I was hoping to wait out this wind and I did, somewhat. I guess it dropped to 25mph or a bit less, The noise had started to quiet down and the whitecaps were getting smaller. With the anchor now tied mid-point on the starboard rail, leeboards halfway down, rudder as well, reefed main, raised and luffing, up came the anchor with the usual ball of mud. With the lee shore just 30' away there was only time for two dunking of the anchor, it was enough. Now the wind waves were breaking along the shore in front of me just off the beach, I had to go through them.

I was wet and soon cold, but the little girl did just fine. For some reason I had left without putting on foulies. Best I could do now was to wrap up in the tent material I had handy. I couldn't leave the tiller, I was still too close to shore to heave to, so using the tent as a wind break did I just fine until I could get in closer and grab my jacket. All in all it was another good sail, from one extreme to another. Got back in about seven hours later.

Concerning

Concerning yesterday's sail from a different perspective, it could have been a disaster. Let me go over the ways, there were more than one. Getting off the beach on the leeward edge of that wind was dicey enough, add in the cold due to being wet and the wave action, one misjudgment might have put me up on the beach in a more unfriendly area with a damaged rudder or such and no radio or cell.

I had figured I could wait it out had that happened, I had two sleeping bags, food, stove and fuel. But further out, had I been in the three quarter mile channel with the wind blowing the direction it was, the next landfall was a good four or five miles off.

A capsiz would not have been good, no good at all. That alone was sobering enough to let me know I had better stack the odds in my favor soon. A drysuit would solve that problem. A better tent, maybe something like Mr Rice used on his recent trip way down south, Cape Horn.

Those who know me know as well my eschewing of such safety gear. Nigh on 70, save a few months, perhaps it's time to take a sobering look at my shenanigans. I act like a wild and woolly teenager in an old man's body. That's the reality of the whole thing. I go out strong but reach the end much, much sooner than ever before. I confess, I was on the edge for several hours. And such as it is, I will more than likely be on that edge again. Lying won't change a thing.

My sister asked, after Harvey, or said pleafully, 'Tell me you have insurance!' My reply, "I can say so, but it won't change a thing."

So will I be changing my sailing approach? Yes and no. I will make the little girl stronger, safer, get a drysuit, but yes, I will still go off alone. I'd like to buddy boat in those situations but, as a reality, it probably ain't gonna happen. I surfed alone, hunted alone and will continue to sail alone. I even drive to morning coffee alone.



Labor Day Weekend

Home half of the Labor Day weekend and finally got good smooth warm paddling weather. The creek all summer long was high and swift. It gave a good upper body workout by paddling upstream against the current. Fishing was hopeless...

The launch site parking lot just had one slot open and we squeezed the van in. Luck was with us, the other parking lot would have been a long haul to the creek. My new bursitis knee would not like the hike.

The limestone smooth bank was a pleasure to launch from. Our last outing on the Des Plaines River was a knee boots only adventure through the slimy bank mud. It only netted us 15 golf balls! Today was a pleasure to launch wearing gym shoes onto a smooth, current free, brown, but clear water. After cutting through the first stretch Mike and I spotted "Eddie the Egret" who let us glide to within 30' before launching himself in flight. I jockeyed myself into position for a camera shot with Mike and "Eddie" together. The timing was perfect.



Mike with "Eddie the Egret"

Moving upstream we came upon a soft-shell turtle sunning itself on a log. It was the first one I've seen all year on the creek. The heavy floods of both spring and summer, I suspect, wiped out most of their generation. Last summer I found their 20lb king/queen floating dead in the backwaters.

Paddling further, we encountered the local Great Blue heron who I've yet to name. Once again he too posed for pictures with son Mike. He then flew upstream and we followed. Mike outdistanced me while I stopped to fish for big Billy Bass. My last three outings for bass here produced nary a bite. I thought they too had all been washed over the 8' dam downstream.



Mike eyeing the friendly local great blue heron.

On my last outing, though I didn't catch any fish, I did manage to snag someone's lost line with a Pikey Minnow lure. After untangling the fishing line and cleaning up the lure, I brought it with me to try today. Several casts over those old blue Gill nests netted a tug on my line! To my glee, a small mouth bass

Early Fall Paddling on Salt Creek

By Bob McCauley

popped out of the brown water. I hauled all 8" of him aboard my kayak. I then released him and tried for more but that was all the excitement that day. As I turned around and paddled back I spotted another foot long bass darting past my bow. I'll get him next time!



Head shot of that big Billy Bass, 8" long between my feet. Our kayaks are a tight fit.

On the return I spotted two Cooper Hawks darting in and out of the dead trees playing diving tag games in the sky. Finally I nosed my kayak onto another mud bank to observe several friendly sandpipers feeding for lunch.



The sandpiper having lunch.

Hey, LUNCH! Time to head back. Mike caught up to me and we landed. It was a peaceful paddle and the local folks on the creek bank made for pleasant conversation. Our two wooden take-a-part kayaks do draw a crowd sometimes.

September 19

A passing cold front dumped 1" of rain the night before. It raised the water level 6". We launched to a warming sun as it burned off the lingering fog and clouds from the night before. We felt a cool breeze from a slight northerly wind in our faces as we paddled upstream in search of "quietude." But it was not to be! We quickly paddled away from the ear busting whine of a log chipper munching on big logs across the creek at our launch site! That sound always brought back memories of working on the tree gang.

No birds were spotted until we scared up the local great blue heron fleeing upstream from us and maybe the noise of that chipper. The local mud flat was deserted of birds. However, to our surprise, we paddled up to a cormorant sitting upright on a log sticking out of water in the middle of the creek. We quietly paddled to within 20' of him and he ignored us! I've never seen a cormorant act so dumb! After photographing Mike and him we kept going upstream to fish.



Mike only paddle's length from the strange cormorant.



Cormorant posing.

The current was light and son Mike shot ahead to the island while I sat back and plunked the water for bass. The fish weren't biting so I caught up to Mike at the island. He already had looped it but trailed me as I tried to do the same. He followed me around but our "quietude" was once again shattered by noisy construction just north of the island. Oh well, looping that island is always a maybe, the water trail is an obstacle course what with ducking under hanging branches and pushing around sweepers.

We then headed back away from the noise. To our surprise we spotted four great blue herons, the most we've ever seen at one time. The local kingfisher flew by on the way back also. There are a lot of schools of minnows to feed those birds. Unbelievably that same cormorant was still sitting on that same log as dumb as ever, maybe sick of something and unable to fly. As we glided by we could have touched him with our paddles. The landing was quiet with that noisy chipper silenced. At least it was a peaceful paddle in the middle of the woods.

This was our first time out since we marine varnished our hulls and the varnish has an unbelievable odor that reeks even after drying one week. It's still sticky to touch. I figured bathing them in the creek would kill that odor. I transport them inside my van. Hopefully that creek slime will kill that varnish odor. Time will tell...

It was just another great day to be out paddling and gliding across that smooth creek. I think paddling is good for the nerves and soul. The only better day on the creek was last spring when I glided up to a bedded down fawn soaking in the morning sun on our nearby mud flat. At 20' he/she rose for its picture. Thank you dear deer! Thanks for the memories, Mike. You all keep paddlin'.

Pilot Gigs: A Brief History

How often does one get invited to attend the launching of a 32' rowboat, a Cornish Pilot Gig, to be exact. If you are used to rowing out to your sailboat in an 8' dink (officially known as a dinghy), 32' looks like a typo in that invitation. Fortunately, I had seen large rowing gigs in the annual Blackburn Challenge race around Cape Ann in Gloucester, Massachusetts, with multiple rowers (mostly 6) in them and a coxswain. But a specific "Cornish Pilot Gig"?

Thanks to Google I quickly got informed. They were talking about a 32' rowboat used in the county of Cornwall (south-west corner of the British Isles), the Isles of Scilly to be even more exact. They were rowed by six oarsmen, each sitting slightly off center, pulling massive oars through the water, while a coxswain who was sitting in the very bow of the gig steered the boat out towards big incoming windjammers or freighters in need of pilots. Bishop Rock Light in the Isles of Scilly has been the landfall for almost all overseas shipping entering the English Channel. That was exactly what we did on the 45' schooner *Fiddler's Green* from Camden, Maine to St. Malo, France in 1977, and in 2011 on the classic 60' yawl *Peter von Seestermühe* (formerly known as *Peter von Danzig*) from the Caribbean island of Antigua to Hamburg, Germany.

The entrance is a very tricky, rocky place, further complicated by wicked tidal currents and legendary fog. Many ships ended up on the rocks. Even the mighty 7-masted schooner, the *Thomas W. Lawson* out of Boston, foundered here, losing all but two of her crew of eighteen. But more boats were safely guided in by competent pilots who were rowed out in very sturdy, seaworthy pilot gigs, nowadays of course replaced by powerful pilot boats.

Those old pilot gigs were fast and often raced each other in order to be the first to deliver their pilot to the incoming big boat, which meant money. And I read those boats were also used as lifesaving boats, picking stranded sailors off the many rocks around the Scilly Isles.

A few of the old gigs survived, as did the plans and molds for building them. When ocean rowing turned into a sport in England, more and more pilot gigs were built, and competitive races were held annually. The Cornish Pilot Gig was the standard. In 2012, for instance, about 2,000 rowers in over 120 pilot boats participated in the Pilot Gig World Championship races in the Isles of Scilly. I have a hard time picturing that many people, plus many more onlookers, on those tiny isolated islands jutting out into the open Atlantic. They look like a

The Launching of a 32' Cornish Pilot Gig Rockland, Maine

By Reinhard Zollitsch
Photos by Nancy Zollitsch

"god-forsaken place" from out at sea. A Jacques Cartier quote about the western shore of Newfoundland comes to mind: This shore is "composed of stones and horrible rugged rocks...this is the land God gave to Cain."

Rowing clubs along our Atlantic shores have picked up on that sport, I noticed. The latest entry in that ever-growing fleet of ocean racers is *Spirit*, built by members of the Apprenticeship, a marine boat building school in Rockland, Maine...which finally brings me back to my topic, the September launching of yet another awesome rowing machine.

The Rockland Gig *Spirit*

I had to see it, and if possible try my luck at the oars. And there she was, resting comfortably on the lawn in front of the workshop, gleaming and reflecting the rich wood-grain of the insides as well as the dark green and lower white paint of the outside lapstrake planks. I was duly impressed with the workmanship of the many joints, the jaunty bow, as well as the classic wineglass transom. I saw a lot of quarter-sawn oak and flawless cedar planking. I could hardly wait to see her in the water.

But no, not yet. There were three other rowing dinghies ready to be christened and launched before the big gig. The ceremony

had started at 10am, two hours after high tide. There were so many long speeches by the directors and each boat builder involved, that I began to get antsy. The water will be gone out of this little bight. Hurry up! We've got to launch the big one! But no, first the three dinghies were properly champagne-christened (first swig for Neptune, then for the boat, and the rest for the builder). Boats were carried to deeper water, launched and rowed off on their maiden voyages: first a 9' Lawley tender, then a 11'3" Susan skiff, and finally an Auk. Then more speeches for the Cornish Pilot Gig, including one from the sponsor woman.

By then the tide was out for good. Seaweed-covered rocks filled the little launching bight. There was no way to heave a heavy 32-footer into its element. So it was decided to carry the boat to the paved boat ramp. Everybody in attendance was called upon to lend a hand, including me. We were at least ten people on each side. The boat at first seemed to float in the air, eager to get to the water. But it got heavier by the minute. Were people dropping out or were they just holding on to the gunwales instead of actively carrying? Everybody was also stepping on each other's heels. I was huffing and puffing, but held on and initiated the 180° turn at the top of the boat ramp, so that the gig could be properly launched stern first. More champagne for Neptune, then over the bow, and the rest for the builders. I could have used a swig also, but instead had to listen to yet another speech. Finally the boat made it into the water. She looked great! Bravo! Mission accomplished.

At the floating dock, the rudder was hung, thole pins were inserted into the gunwales, six oars were brought down from the shed, and six oarsmen, all boat builders or instructors, stepped in. The sponsor woman got the honor of steering, but almost sent the boat through the underpinnings of the pier. I saw it coming, watching the angle of the rudder, cringed and made some audible remarks. The boat stopped and then tried some more open water.

The Row

After a while, the boat came back to the dock with everybody smiling from ear to ear. They seemed very happy with the new 32' beast. "So, who is next? Anybody want to try her out?" "YES! ME HERE!" And the boat filled up in no time. I got to row on position two (counted from the bow). I was elated. This was exactly what I had hoped for. I had rowed in college, and rowed my own dinghy forever, and considered myself a pretty good oarsman. So were the other five rowers. Even the coxswain knew what he was doing. This was fun, but oh so different from rowing a solo shell on sheltered waters.



She is a big one.

The portage (author on starboard bow).



The launching site.



First, the oar weighed a ton, so it seemed. There were tholepins instead of oarlocks, no problem. But all of us left feathering the oars for later. We had to get the feel for the boat first. I missed a foot brace right from the beginning. So I wedged my feet against an upright under the seat in front of me. But my, were those seats, the six planks the six rowers sit on, slippery and hard. I would need to tie in my canoe pad in order to stay in place, wear rubberized pants or wear a seat belt. (Just kidding!)



Getting ready for a test row, notice tholepins instead of oarlocks.



Pushing off for a great row.

"You are all doing very well," I then heard the coxswain say. "How about ten big ones. Let's get her up to speed!" He did not have to say that twice. We put our backs into each stroke, and the boat came to life with a splashy, sporty bow wave. It felt fast, and I think we were fast, but also getting tired fast. But like the first crew, we smiled from ear to ear when we finally landed at the floating dock, after a sizable loop through the harbor.

It is a real fun boat, I surmised, a real team boat, which needs lots of training and crew conditioning to finish the 20-mile Blackburn Challenge in good standing, if that is the goal. I have done the race in my lightweight Hawaiian solo outrigger canoe for the past 16 years, and know how long it is, and how rough it can be. But this new gig is fun, fast and a feast for the eyes. Congratulations to the builders, the instructors, as well as the school, to have undertaken such a big

project and succeeded on all accounts. Well done! Everybody seemed pleased, impressed and gratified.

The crowd then drifted back to the boat-house, talking shop and about their own rowing experiences, while nibbling on bacon sticks, various veggies and yummy deviled eggs. The champagne had been used up for the four christening events. So orange juice and bottled water had to do as fluid replenishment. A good idea, since most of us were from away and had to drive home.

Thanks, Nancy, for coming along. I would not have missed this moment for anything. How often would I get to see the launching of a 32' rowboat and even get the chance to try it out. The day turned into a real event. Awesome! Nancy and I talked about it all the way home to Orono, and we thought you MAIB readers might like to hear about it also. Enjoy!

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Big River

The endangered Blanchard's Cricket Frog has not been heard in the Driftless Zone of the Mississippi for over 50 years but one was found near La Crosse, Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Frog and Toad Survey, a volunteer organization that actually pays attention to all things croaking found this species. The Badger folks actually run the largest survey in North America and they have a new endowment.

Although anyone who has ever read this monthly article knows, they should not be surprised by the constant and chronic discourse on the Dead Zone in the Gulf off Louisiana. At 8,800 square miles, this void is caused by farm runoff nitrates to the tune of approximately 2,800 railroad cars worth of toxic chemicals per year running into the Gulf. Researchers said it is virtually impossible to stifle this pollution unless farmers upriver reduce chemical usage by more than 60%. Monsanto, ADM and friends simply are not going to let that happen. It is all "fake news."

First it was "kill all the elm trees" because of Dutch elm disease, now it is "kill all the ash trees" because of the Ash Borer. The rationale for such botanic slaughter escapes me. Isn't it like Hitler saying he was really trying to cure cancer in Jews, Jehovah's Witnesses, Gypsies and Communists by killing them off? Anyway, 1,000 Iowa oak trees are dying because of herbicide used on corn and soybeans. Of course, the Farm Bureau had no comment and Monsanto feigned ignorance. An autumn float down the Ol' Miss enjoying the turning colors may rapidly become a thing of the past.

Trivia: The Mississippi bluffs are covered with maple trees that provide so much color in the autumn, but maples are not indigenous to Iowa. Those bluffs were once blanketed with oaks, chestnuts, walnuts and a myriad of other hardwood trees. Between 1850 and 1930 these trees were clearcut for lumber. My own paternal grandfather used to talk about having the job of cutting down every single tree on one such bluff near the incredibly beautiful Wexford area. The native trees were slow growth things and while little seedlings tried mightily to proliferate, the quick maturing and very mobile seeds of the maples edged them out.

Effigy Mounds National Park, a 10,000-year-old Indian burial grounds, atop the Iowa bluffs looking down upon the Mississippi, is full of maples. The Park Service has long debated whether to let the park stand as it or try to put it back the way it was a couple of hundred years ago. The entire biological environment has been altered. The wild nuts and berries have disappeared, the hardwoods are gone and the land itself is impassible because of underbrush that could not grow when the hardwood forest existed. That argument has raged since I was a child.

FYI: Vacationers will find Effigy Mounds museum and trails, the cities of Marquette and McGregor, and Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, wonderful sites. The Villa Louis, Camp Crawford's Medical Museum, and a riverboat ride will provide very inexpensive couple of days of great history. Then make the great loop up to Winona, Minnesota, cross the river and come downstream to La Crosse, Wisconsin. Quiet, inexpensive and absolutely beautiful to say nothing about all the history of the region.

Lock and Dam #2 has opened for operation again after a lengthy low water situa-



Over the Horizon

By Stephen D.
(Doc) Regan

tion on the Ohio River creating an inability to sustain necessary pool. Stealing a line from author Michael Reisig, sometimes God just likes to play pinball with us. Sometimes we are the balls and sometimes we are the paddles. While Houston and Florida were inundated, sections of the Midwest couldn't buy a drop of rain.

Accidents

A traveling hamburger boat near Cordova, Illinois, sank quickly after hitting a wing dam. Several adults, a pair of small children and a couple of dogs required rescuing. Locals have already set up a GoFundMe account to build a new one. Evidently the hamburgers were really good.

Harbor pilots in San Francisco have voiced their concerns about the rash of US Navy collisions. One pilot stated that the Navy Captains are poorly trained in basic seamanship and lack appropriate certifications. Perhaps more importantly, it is the Navy philosophy that is the root of the matter. In Maritime Law which ship has the right of way is very specific, however, in Admiralty Law the military ship always has the right of way until it reaches "extremis." Pilots stated that too often Navy destroyers that can turn on a dime simply do not give way to merchant vessels that take miles to maneuver. More about this later.

Two are dead, three are missing and seven are hospitalized because of a collision off Two Sisters Island between Singapore and Palau Bata (Indonesia, for us folk who took Geography in 1961). *Kartika Segara*, a tanker, left the Port of Singapore and entered the heavily travelled westward bound route. The tug, *Bina Marine 1*, gave way but it was followed closely by *JBB De Rong*, a dredger, which smacked the tanker and capsized. VTS operators warned both ships immediately before the crash and those messages were acknowledged. And ignored. Evidently *JBB De Rong* did "de rong ting at de rong time."

White Fleet

Hurricanes Harvey and Irma left the White Fleet in total disarray. Hundreds of ships were treading water in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico and several were cruise liners waiting to dump off passengers. Some of the cruise ships rerouted to different ports, that caused havoc with those who had planes to catch at airports hundreds of miles from where they disembarked and folks whose cars were parked where they were supposed to land. Cries of discontent were heard all over the coast. Irony, people take a nice relaxing trip at sea to get away from the hubbub of life and immediately become irrational beings with short fuses.

Some of the fleet remained out at sea at no additional cost to the vacationers. Still, there was whining and bemoaning. On the other hand, free food, several great bars, a sauna and a great excuse for not getting back to work does not seem too bad. Am I missing something?

Carnival, Norwegian and Royal Caribbean were among those who had a flood of re-routing, cancellations and supply problems. Nevertheless these companies managed to provide evacuation for hundreds of stranded Floridians who couldn't get out of Irma's way. *Adventurer of the Sea* made a massive humanitarian relief call at St Maarten. *Majesty of the Sea* hauled relief supplies to St Maarten and St Thomas. Carnival Cruises, with assistance of shareholders, donated over \$2 million to Caribbean aid.

Quite obviously, Caribbean stops will be greatly diminished as virtually all the Windward and Leeward Islands attempt recovery. In another irony, the economy of these islands necessary for recovery is primarily based on tourism that will dwindle because the islands haven't recovered.

Gray Fleet

Great Britain's First Sea Lord, Sir Philip Jones, announced that the Royal Navy would turn to unmanned entities for Anti-mine and Hydrographic missions. Using autonomous air systems, open architecture and artificial intelligence, the Queen's Navy will be at the cutting edge of modern technology. Considering the American Navy's collisions in recent weeks, artificial intelligence has been on the bridge for years.

Speaking of which, the Government Accounting Office, the investigative branch of Congress, provided intriguing data on the lack of warfare certified crew aboard both the *USS John McCain* and the *USS Fitzgerald*. While finger pointing went in all directions, it must be noted that the *Fitzgerald* scored zero in terms of certified crew and the *McCain* had non certified people in six of ten areas. The GAO said the Navy has far too few trained and certified men and women, sails while undermanned, has too many missions for each ship and tends to rely too heavily on computerized systems. Further, GAO suggested that the Navy turn to civilian companies such as BP America, Boeing, Maersk and Crowley for assistance in training.

This cannot be much of a surprise. The step stones to ship command are lengthy and bewildering. Junior officers start out as assistant department heads before serving a stint ashore, then they might go aboard for a couple of years as a department head before another tour ashore, they may have a third cruise and a third shore duty under their belts before obtaining the requisite position as Executive Officer. After a few more years of shore assignments they might obtain a command of a ship. They will sit on the bridge for a couple of years and then shuffle off to retirement (unless they sucked up really hard and earned a star). Of course, there are always occasional deviations from this process. But carrier skippers probably spent far more years flying than they did learning anything about ship handling. Since World War II the Navy has required all carrier captains to be fliers and not surface warfare sailors.

In other words, most ships' captains are woefully inexperienced. It is one of the reasons that former Navy skippers are NOT qualified to sail a merchant ship.

In other Gray Fleet news, the US National Ice Center (really, we have an ice center?) is currently operating with the Navy and Coast Guard in airdropping ice buoys in the Arctic. The Polar icecap has extraordinary atmospheric lows similar to hurricanes. These lows greatly influence weather pat-

terns and knowledge of them will enhance weather prediction that has become less reliable than my grandmother's aching bunions. The buoys are expected to have a life expectation of three to five years.

The complaints from Navy officers and Chiefs about shoes lit up the computer recently because of crumbling shoes. Bates uniform white shoes are the regulation driven shoe worn with white uniforms, however, the soles crumble like crackers after minimal use. One Ensign complained that her shoes literally crumbled off her feet while she was at an award ceremony and she provided photos to prove it. Of course, the Bates Company, that supplies 60,000 shoes to the military each year, denies any problem with their product and returns the blame on the individuals.

Bates posits that the polyurethane is the issue because it oxidizes easily and tends to disintegrate when kept in dry areas without proper ventilation, as in lockers and closets. Dr Martens makes a similar shoe but it is not regulation, a fact that bothers neither officers nor Midshipmen. Most of the impacted personnel have gone out and bought their own Dr Martens at about \$100. Wolverine Worldwide, an American company, owns Bates. Dr Martens is a European owned company.

Merchant Fleet

After learning of England's unmanned ships it was interesting to read that Rolls Royce, Japanese shipbuilders and Kongberg (a Norwegian shipping company) are working on an all electric, unmanned container ship that is scheduled for completion by 2020. That's about two years from now, isn't it? They are keeping close communications with the Royal Navy and its unmanned technology. People in the know point to the US Navy collision record as a rip roaring example of human fallibility. They believe that the best situation is when people are kept out of the picture. Isaac Asimov might well have been spot on vis-a-vis robots.

Cummins Marine now uses a 3D printer with metal alloys to repair badly damaged cylinder heads. Dr Niyanth Sridharan's post-doctoral research created a laser direct metal deposition 3D printer with sensors for material heat and climate temperature to create "patches" or other materials. This machine provides the extreme tolerance necessary for such fine engineering and it ensures that the cast iron elements do not break.

Sea Life

Since 1950 the world has produced about 88.2 billion tons of plastic, most of which ends up in landfills for all eternity. Unfortunately a monstrous amount ends up in the oceans and rides the currents. A major gyre in the South Pacific has become an island

of plastic, going in circles and simply IS. In July 2017 Charles Moore confirmed that the plastic garbage patch the size of Mexico does exist and is caught on a merry go round current. Now Upgyres has decided that this isn't all as bad as thought. They propose that it can be profitably recycled using modern technology. Using solar powered robots to extract four tons of plastic per hour, optical sorting machines can separate the plastics according to chemical composition and then can store these plastics for pick up and recycling. Don't you just love it when one person's problems can become another's opportunity!

The horrific 1900 hurricane that destroyed Galveston, Texas, had winds of up to 135mph, 3,600 buildings were utterly shattered and the death toll was a gasping 6,000 to 12,000 people. The reason that Texas and Galveston were so horribly unprepared is because Washington believed that the storm was not going to enter the Gulf of Mexico but turn north and dump New England with a lot of rain. What is so unbelievable is that the US Weather Bureau was not allowed to issue warnings in Texas because the information about the hurricane came from Cuba and the US government refused to accept information from such an unreliable source as that former Spanish colony. The Weather Bureau could not proffer warnings because Washington refused to allow them. Aren't you happy that politics has improved so much since those days!

Other Nautical News

Maritime Archeology has become a popular activity for amateur divers a long way from salt water. The Great Lakes is a hot spot for folks who want to play Robert Ballard without all the financial support or equipment he has and, better yet, the Lakes have lots and lots of wrecks. The downside to this activity is that the largest freshwater entity in the world is astonishingly cold, incredibly deep and has zero visibility (I love adjectives). If that isn't enough, the Great Lakes can be as calm as bath water looking, for all the world, like a huge mirror so solid you feel you can walk from Duluth to Erie, Pennsylvania, right on top of it. On the other hand, they can whip up a storm before you can race from deck to wheelhouse and then sink you like a rock. Think of the *Edmund Fitzgerald*.

Wrecks on the bottom tend to be in fairly pristine condition because of the cold and the depth. Several ships have been found in virtually perfect shape. A favorite story in the Great Lakes regions is about the Christmas Tree boat that came to people on islands or on the shores where other vehicles could not provide service. Each December the Christmas Tree Boat would come to these outposts with a boatload of freshly cut pines

so that people could have Christmas trees. These tough and rugged people would line the shores and docks anxiously waiting for the boat while celebrating the occasion.

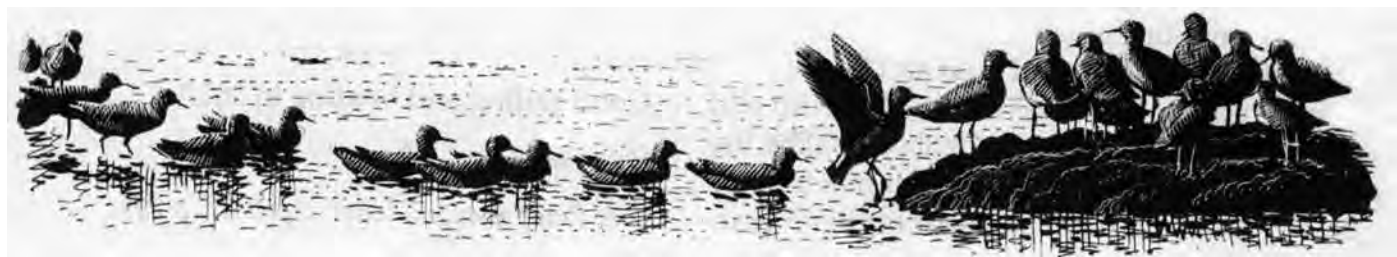
One of the wrecks found was a Christmas Tree Boat with an upright tree still attached to the bow of the boat. Many of the sunken vessels were lumber haulers and this makes them especially valuable. The old growth hardwood logs are in perfect condition and very valuable. Getting them off the bottom of Lake Superior is a prodigious and downright dangerous chore but the payoff is exquisite. Alaska may have its Gold Fever but the Great Lakes regions have their Old Growth Fever.

Minds continue to blow as technology exponentially tenders new virtually science fiction possibilities. Boeing has plans for a pilotless freighter that is a cross between a plane and a boat. Being built by Singapore's Widgetworks, the Air Fish 8 skims across the water on an air cushion but with wings attached it can attain speeds roughly one quarter of a jet. This unmanned thingamajig has retractable wheels so it can cross water and then run up a runway to a terminal. Currently the weight carrying ability is a miserly one ton.

Can you imagine a world without freighters carrying hundreds of containers that are unloaded at a port, transported to a rail car or truck and then delivered to any place in the US? We will have uncrewed thingamabobs that ride across the waves, run up to the shore and then cross the US 40' off the ground over interstates (no more semis on the roads). Some kid will control all this with a joystick sitting on a sofa munching popcorn and sipping his Coke. Wild. Crazy, it's going to happen before we know it!

Small Boats

Wooden Boat had a fine article on historians' desire to have Mount Vernon, Washington's home, run much as it did during his Presidency. A proper small replica of a boat that was used in the 1700s sent scholars scurrying through old files. In the day 1.5 million herring and 10,000 shad ran up the Potomac River and into the larder at Mount Vernon. A group of boat builders successfully submitted a plan for a 21' version of a 30' flat-bottomed, doubleended Colonial Military Bateau. Hand sawing from an oak log they made planks measuring 21"x12"x2" for the keel and 16' cypress planks for the remainder of the hull. Everything was connected with clenched iron nails and the boat made seaworthy with plenty of oakum, pine tar, beeswax and pine pitch. She was hauled to the river for her first meeting with water by a pair of oxen. Almost makes one want to take another trip to Virginia.



It's been miserable here this September. I know, it's always hot in September but it is getting worse, not us getting older or anything.

We went to look at John's new houseboat today. He wants a small shantyboat that he can take when he goes fishing a ways from home so he doesn't have to make the long ride both ways in his fishing boat on the same day. He'll tow it, fish and relax in the evening. He's been dealing with a crazy old lady for the last two months trying to see this thing. I took a picture to show you what John considers "old lady" stuff. We almost fell over when she got out of her little car.



He did buy it but I forgot to take a picture of the boat. Here it is after we got it home. It's a Yukon Delta made in Elkhart, Indiana, sometime in the middle of the last century. It's a 25' tri hull with a 6' tall cabin on top. It's exactly what he was looking for. It will get stripped down to its bare essentials, cleaned up, repowered, repainted and will look like a jewel.



Richard's Scamp is getting its makeup put on, ain't this little roller cool. He's going to name it *Dirty Banana*.



From the Tiki Hut

By Dave Lucas



Jim's Scamp is getting its interior put in.



Wally is almost ready to launch his all weather commuter. It will have a really cool breeze blowing through with the Dutch front door open.



When the horrible hurricane was coming to get us I only brought one thing in from the shop, *Queen Anne's* wheel that Howard made for me from a 150-year-old red cedar tree that grew on one of the islands right off my beach. It blew down a couple of years ago and washed up on my beach.



Here's the latest on the *Queen*. After all kinds of delays things are finally happening. It's been ten months since I pulled her into this new shop and she should be floating by now. The area in the back where the mat is lying is the end of the equipment space. The hull will be extended for an additional 5' past the back you see here. It will contain both of the engines, the twin 28gal fuel tanks and the generators (two Hondas, a 2kw and a 7kw). The center will be open for walking down to the swim platform and ladder. The dropped area in front of the mat with the garbage can sitting there is the bathroom, it's 6'x8'.



Here's the view from the main cabin looking aft. All of the hatches in the floor are for storage down the middle and access to mechanicals on the outside ones.



The other view is looking forward to the V-berth. It'll have shelves along the sides as well as the shelf up front. Helen can almost stand up in it. The berth will have 6" memory foam mattresses, we're testing some out with the seats in *Lurlyne*. All of the inside walls are insulated with a cover of 1/4" plywood over the foam.



The area over the shelf is the secondary anchor locker. Up front is the primary anchor locker that will have an electric windlass and 100' of 1/4" chain hooked to a big plow anchor. I just want to be able to push a button when I want to drop the hook to take a nap.



Here's the secondary anchor locker. It is plenty big enough to hold a 20lb Danforth, its chain and rode and enough room left over for other junk. I like figuring out these complicated parts like this or framing in the windows. I get tired of crawling around putting in fiberglass floors.



Looking through the bedroom window at one of the captain's chairs, I was sitting there figuring out how to make really good seats for us to endure long days traveling the world and the thought flashed into my head that the most comfortable seats around are upscale office chairs so we went chair shopping for the best we could find. I'll mount them on platforms so they can be solid and

still do all of their chair tricks. Needed leather for wet cloths and such. I had to get them in advance to get the positioning of the panel and windows right.



Today was Helen's 70th birthday so we went for a boat ride, she's easy to entertain.



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Fish or Cut Bait

Well, I think the entire Frankenwerke crew called in sick today. Not even Jamie the Sea Dog showed up for the morning staff meeting. Just me, 'n Tom and neither one of us were all that enthusiastic either. Dithering is what they call it. I keep thinking about the current political aphorism gaining currency in some of the more pointy headed circles that I traverse, "When you realize that you're in a hole, stop digging!"



Then I start thinking about Chesty Puller. When he got his arse surrounded at Chosin Reservoir back in Korea, his idea was it was a good thing because he could now attack in all directions. But then he had all them jarheads. I was all by myself today and my command presence needed a bit of a spiffing up, too. Dithering, I tell ya, and feeling surrounded.



The problem centered on which path to take, much like with Yogi Berra's famous quip, "When you come to a fork in the road, definitely take one." My problem was that the "new" trailer wasn't really ready to recover a boat from the water. I wasn't really sure that if I managed to get *MK* back through the not yet shaped supports she could conceivably tip over while negotiating that damn hill at the ramp. And the "old" trailer didn't have the winch stand, bow chock or keel guides. Either way I figured it was time to bring the boat home and continue with this game of thrones. Still I dithered. Finally I decided that I would have the best shot with the "old" trailer. If nothing else, I figured that I could just put the winch stand, keel guides and a few rollers back on and be serviceable for the remainder of the good weather. So I figured, so we hooked up and went down that hill.



The View from Almost Canada by Dan Rogers

It woulda been a nice day for a boat ride. But we had work to do.



Without the guides and stops and such, we kind of landed crooked. Not too bad. And then things started to unravel like negative tongue weight. As I crept up that damn hill I could hear the hitch trying to lift off the ball. What a creepy feeling that brings. I figured it was better to keep going, ever soooooo slowly but keep going. Then it was downhill. I watched the mooring lines that held her on the rollers in the mirrors. So far, so good.



But what in the heck was that "klunk... klunk... klunk...? The hitch maybe maybe? As I backed in, one of the trailer tires just didn't look right. Hmmm...

First glance, I wondered how and why the little hub cap had gone AWOL. Second glance, the spindle nut wasn't in the middle of the hole. Third, well, "Where the hell is the outside bearing race?" After over 20,000 miles of travelling all over the damn place, the wheel bearing chose to depart the ship within a half mile of home. Thank you God!



The starboard side is the one that always seemed a bit warmer to the touch when I would check. Never hot, never squeaking, always full of grease, just a bit warmer. But the fun was only beginning. That negative tongue pressure is a fancy way of saying that the boat would tip over backward once released from the hitch ball. Not a good thing for the rudder and the motor and my sense of equanimity. So I hooked up a chain fall to the safety chain shackle that has also stood guard for those same 20K miles and started taking a load against the towing eye to slide the hull a foot or two forward. Ka-thwack!



That shackle failed and sent the tackle flying. Things were getting a bit annoying to say the least. Now that I look at the results, I am ashamed to admit that I thought this piece of hardware store fluff had any chance of holding anything on behind had the hitch disconnected (like it could have with that negative tongue pressure, for instance).



Anyhow, I had to get things balanced to be able to get on with it. At that point I didn't know (still don't) if the spindle would be serviceable on this, the "old" trailer. It seemed time for a bit of decisiveness on my part. I decided to swap trailers right there in the driveway. Devil take the hindmost!



Did I tell you that the keel wasn't sitting properly for any rolling around? Probably partly why the chain parted under moderate pull. So the rig had to be backed in and chain falls, slings, crane, jacks, dunnage, wheel chocks, prybars and such had to be mobilized. The keel was being mangled on the roller rails.

This piece of the catacombs shows how the bottom has never really gotten painted, or faired, or even inspected regularly. It's really no place anybody old enough to know better should be crawling with a paint brush after an hour or so to get rigged,



It took about three minutes to shove the boat over 3". Then it was time to do the end for end. The whole time that starboard wheel was threatening to simply lay over and add to the chaos. Then it got scary.



That boat weighs over 3,000lbs. The only way I can get one trailer out from under is to nose in to the garage door frame where I have a couple of steel gussets that can carry chain falls. Robust enough, but never actually intended for this sort of loading. Probably OK, I hope.

I figured I could maybe get Alice in there for part of the pulling and shoving, but not all. I came real close to upending a ceiling-high paint shelf unit with the tractor wheel. Not more than an extra 1/2" of maneuvering space once in there. So another hour to rig and cross fingers and pray.

And, then suddenly, it was game time.



Maneuvering those trailers in and out by hand required periodic assists from the floor jack to work as a sort of "bow thruster" to get those tires to slide sideways, along with 12 to maybe 18 hundred pounds of trailer. The whole time I was thinking nice thoughts about the Chinese political prisoners who made those Harbor Freight chain falls and tow straps being pressed into service as a travel lift.



Alice did her part but hydraulic fluid was running past the seals on that little ram whose day job is to lift the snow blade, not this unbalanced behemoth. But like with Chesty at the

Chosin, this was no time for cowardice in the face of the enemy. Press on, regardless.

After more ooching and mooching, *Tom* finally crawled under *Miss Kathleen*. Neither one looked all so very comfortable with the arrangement. Nothing fits yet, not at all. At least I could finally slow to a more normal heart rate and sort of begin to figure out what's next.



I really coulda used some of them jar-heads. I'm kinda worried about what is gonna break tomorrow. "Tennnnn-hutt! For'd harch!"

A Truce, of Sorts

There's no doubting Chesty Puller and his boys' heroics and sacrifice at the Frozen Chosin, but my analogy slaps me upside the head for its hubris. That particular chapter in American warfare ended up back at the original line of scrimmage and, I must report, that after about 12 or 14 hours of grunting, groaning, pulling, shoving and burrowing; I am right back where I was about two days ago. Today was a day of splitting, prying, lifting, shoving and careening. All of which would have been possible in about 20 minutes if *Miss Kathleen* was still in the water. But there's this upside, if I had continued to shape stuff and bolt stuff to my original measurements, it all would have had to come off once she went back in the water anyhow. Soooooo, I'll declare victory and call a truce, until tomorrow anyway.

We who think of ourselves as "discovery learners" must be fully prepared to accept that phrase as a classic oxymoron. My initial assumption was that the roller track set

under the stub keel would need to climb by 1½" from back to front. So yesterday, before mounting the boat in the way, I set that track on a 1½" thick piece of cedar. It was bolted through but my guess was that I could "simply" split it out with a chisel if it needed dropping back down to the frame.



And I had a similar "plan" with all those wedges that I ground down and made a complete mess of the place doing it. But now, they were wedged under the boat and kinda picky about their place in the cosmos.



Firmly stuck under the boat.



And that was all still copacetic until I discovered the center of balance with a dual axle rig is not the same thing as a single. I hadda move the boat about 2' forward to get the requisite tongue weight and, to do that, all those shapes and shims had to go.



First went the shim under the keel rollers. That took about two hours of lifting and careening and cajoling.



Then came the other shapes laboriously ground on the wide side of those 2"x6"s. All those screws had to be found and extracted to avoid holing the hull. I think of 'em as frags.

Seems my big bandsaw threw a capacitor about two boats ago, but after initial failure to find parts for a 75-year-old Delta saw, I just sort of forgot about it. My midsized bandsaw needs track tires that never quite fit when I order 'em. That saw has been idled for quite a while, too. My small band saw from HF is a little wonder but I broke my last blade the other day and can't get one locally. And well, you see resawing a bevel into these boards just wasn't a happening thing. So, after spending a whole night shift making those wedges, I spent half a day shift breaking 'em out from under the boat.



Then, before beginning the process of sliding the hull forward on the trailer, MK slid sideways.



So that's why mom always said "work on a level surface." Well, one set of wheels was on the driveway, the other slowly settling into the pile of grass clippings that will probably turn to topsoil in a year or two. The big shop crane isn't real fond of working in a peat bog and threatened to capsize several times. The floor jack under the keel was similarly prejudiced. But a combo of about five jacks and good ol' Alice the tractor got'er slid back in no more than about two hour's work. I backed Alice in and blocked her wheels, then with a chain fall hooked up to the drawbar, we started a tug-o-war. Remember that old playground game we used to play back in grade school? "Lift, wobble and skid?" Well, we played that game for the longest time until MK's 3,000lbs bested Alice's 2,500lbs and the tractor had been winched over to the boat.

Don't ask me why I did it this way, seemed like a good plan at the time. So the durn boat was still crooked on the trailer and hung up on the foundations for the bunks and that, my friends, is because of that damn roller track under the keel. Seems it was going to need about 1½" of shimming to get things working out. Yep, and a stack of washers or even bored out metal plates stacked up

won't work because I can't pull that 6"x½" carriage bolt out without the boat being someplace else. I could have cut a slot in a stack of aluminum plates if I had a working bandsaw and enough scrap ¼" plate.

I told you this job is beginning to look like the last 68 years in Korea. Back. Forth. Stalemate. Try again. Stalemate.



So, we now have another 1½" shim in place, this time, hardwood. Harder to split, less likely to compress. Then with a whole lot of judicious use of jacks and cranes she finally slid forward to where (I think) she will need to stay for the balancing act these trailers do on the highway.



There were other "small unit skirmishes" and even some pitched battles fought today. And the best we can report from this particular foxhole is that there is still tomorrow. We will likely try the same stuff and earnestly hope for different results. Clausewitz called it the "fog of war."

Scared to Death

Oddly, for a guy who has always been scared of heights, the ab-so-lut-ley last thing I wanted to be doing this afternoon was heading to the bottom of a certain steep hill. Looking back, it wasn't such a big deal but when I started down the hill leading to our launch ramp with *Miss Kathleen* just perched on the inner bunks on *Tom Dually's* fore and aft frame members, I would not have been all that surprised to have her join me in the driver's seat. We were lashed with several mooring lines of substantial diameter but I needed to launch again to be able to invent the bow chocks. Mostly it was time to stop crawling under that cockamamie trailer and work from above. And that, of course, needed the boat to be someplace else. I already tried that high wire act with the crane and chain falls. No, she needed to be back in the water.

And the water happens to be at the bottom of a steep hill. It was damn the torpedoes, press on regardless time. I had spent the day shaping the runners that will carry much of the boat's weight when carpeted and

smoothed up a bit. It's a complex curve cut into red fir 2"x6"s.



A moderately fair curve, but a variable slope and the majority of it must be figured in a 5' tunnel under the boat and behind the wheels and generally a muzzable SOB to even see, much less actually measure. Four 8' boards took about two hours apiece to shape and tack into place. Everything will be bolted and secured once I can get a 1/2" drill in there to do the boring.



I couldn't just mark the boards and cut 'em later, this is what the boat was sitting on to go down that steep hill to get to the water. Like that old kid's song, "I don't know why, she swallowed the fly." The whole time I was trying to remember why I didn't follow Montana Jim's advice, it was actually my first idea of how to do this never ending job. Like he said, all I had to do was jack the bunks into place and mount 'em on metal stanchions. All I had to do. Plenty strong and a lot easier all around. Well, that's not what I did. But I did do lot of noodling on this and there were seemingly good reasons for all of this.

It has to do with how a tapered, cambered and rounded shape floats. It also has to do with how all launch ramps are not created equal. That, and how we trailer haulers should "color inside the lines." Certainly guys who get paid to do this sort of mental gymnastics already know how to do this stuff but somehow the Frankenwerke staff has decided that I should be able to figure this out, all on my own. And here we are.

I thought that rollers would push up into MK's admittedly super annuated hull with deleterious effect so long and shaped to fit bunks were the Big Idea. That's not all bad, especially for a road warrior such as she, bouncing and jouncing over hill, dale and metropolis. But one of the reasons the folks of the Roller

School of Thought have been so pervasively successful is that rollers actually WORK. Granted, most boats sit passively most of the time. Most boats take relatively short trips, float for a while and then return to their nests. I'm dealing with a real road warrior that gets launched sometimes several times in one day at several different locations. We gotta be ready for just about anything.

Of course, Tom was specifically designed to work with ROLLERS. Yep, but I figured I could make it work anyway, so that's pretty much how I ended up creeping down that horrible hill hoping that the law of gravity had been modified and the coefficient of friction doubled, just for my benefit.



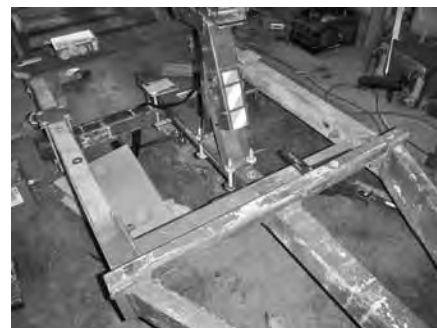
And yes. I think it must have been. Now back into the shop for paint and miscellaneous stuff that I haven't thought up yet. I'll let you know how it goes from here.

There's a Tunnel at the End of the Light

Ever have one of those days when you started early, were still at it until late and you really can't remember what you worked on? Well this was one of those. There was an endless number of 1/2" bolts that needed holes and nuts and washers and ratcheting tight. The old trailer gave up the tongue extension that had once been the replacement tongue that I installed in Lady Bug's trailer, Quigley, while parked on the street in Chula Vista, in a towaway zone as I recall. Quigley died from metal fatigue brought on by a form of leukemia that only boat trailers contract. The disease is most virulent in areas of the country adjacent to salt water. Now a portion of Quigley's prosthesis from that first emergency surgery is carrying another member (3" steel square tube) extracted from the remains of a HF shop crane that the majority of is currently installed on Alice the Tractor's backside for when we need to lift and drag stuff.



The winch stand from the old trailer now sits atop a portion of that HF shop crane stand and that's all assembled with 1/2" carriage bolts and 4" squares of 3/8" steel plates that come from the lumber yard's dock repair supplies. The winch stand used to be quite a bit taller and has been cycled through several boat trailers. I think it started out on the EZ loader frame that now serves as the bones of my going to the dump trailer. That's the one when I was painting the wooden floor, box and rails, I asked Dan at the hardware store paint department to mix me up some primer that would cover and be essentially the same red as the topcoat. Well, Dan's primer came out blatantly as pink. Before I got the red on it I was regularly using it to go to the dump. Funny, nobody seemed willing to park next to me where I have to back in to dump my trash. Wonder why?



The treated 2"x10" is bolted on in a way that it can slide forward a bit as may be needed to support the bow roller. That's a sort of an unknown right now. I do know that when the stern of the boat starts floating and the hull starts rolling off, the bow takes a plunge. I'm going to have to do a few tryfers to see just how much of a plunge that is going to be now and then position that bow chock.



The keel guides made from plastic plate stock scrap left over from early on Lady Bug projects, like the mast holder brackets and the original mast raising gin pole socket/pivot and even a step that was once inculcated into Big Ole's (my peripatetic Chevy van) back bumper as a step to allow for accessing Quigley the trailer's catwalk system that allowed me to launch and recover that boat without getting my shoes wet. The leavings from all those projects are now more or less positioned to guide Miss Kathleen's stub keel onto the center line.





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All of this sits on another refugee from the scrap pile. The V-shaped projection should be a dead giveaway, another portion of another scrapped trailer, another EZ loader from under another one of those boats that has passed on through Frankenwerke at some juncture. Dunno when, where, who anymore.



There's a beginning of a rattle down guide chute that will be expanded once we can get a better handle on the intimacies *MK* may show toward frame members, axles and such when coming and going. The water is already too damn cold to do any more diving down and observing so this will be worked out forensically, examining paint scrapes and dings mostly. Lots of extrapolating.



The interior fore and aft bunks are all doubled and bolted together, along with the shaped pieces that are soooooo easy to just put my hand on and see and manipulate with the boat not sitting on them. The outboard bunks will either be widened, carved, carpeted or left alone. I think of them as sort of a set of training wheels that should help keep *MK* in her assigned seat while travelling.



There is a very robust frame that hangs the spring hangers and mounts the box fenders that are about as stiff and substantial as many of the lighter duty trailer frames I see on the ramps around the country. *Tom* is certainly going to be hell for stout. When this trailer was masquerading as a hay hauler, Fred or one of his predecessors welded a heavy piece of strap across the back. That had to be partially removed to allow for the *MK*'s keel to pass. I left the remainder awaiting further observation of how things work both underwater and on the road.



The remaining portions are quite substantial but also would serve as shin wangers of the most obnoxious degree. All that had to be sort of encapsulated (this time with some of those cedar 2"x6"s that proved too splitty for the bunk cap substrate.) They will be a great place to mount some tail lights. And I'm hatching a scheme to have a pull out stand up boarding ladder that should hopefully make quick access to the boat's cockpit, stow out of the way and not get in the way while launching and recovering. Just the foundation for that invention is present right now but I have the details more or less drawn on that mental etch-a-sketch pad everybody here at Frankenwerke brings to work every day.

One of the first things I can remember doing today was replacing those hardwood blocks (shimming up under the keel roller track) with a stack of leftover leaf spring U-bolt backing plates, all with convenient holes drilled smack dab in the middle. I raised the forward end to 1 3/4". Hope I guessed correctly.

When I dropped my time card in the slot tonight there was a pile of tools and stuff scattered all over the floor. I managed to totally destroy a package of expensive Sawzall metal cutting blades on something today. I nearly wore out a grinding disc on the angle grinder. There was a stack of 1/2" drill bits on the floor, many of which showed telltale signs of overheating (usually from drilling through thick steel that has been "heat treated" with a weld bead nearby).

Anyhow, if I can sort of bend my fingers in the morning I think it's finally time to start covering up some of those rust spots with paint. Much to do but maybe it doesn't seem like such a big job, if I can't remember what I just finished.

Denial maybe?

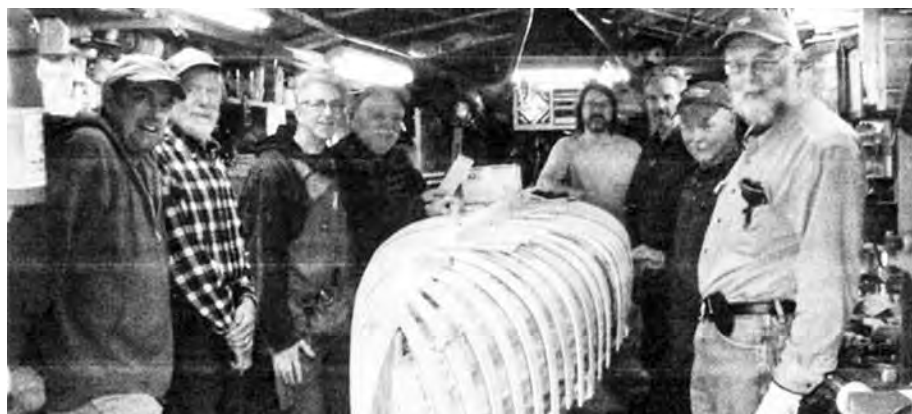




Norumbega Chapter WCHA

By Steve Lapey

Norumbega's 2018 Prospector Project moved ahead at full throttle in mid October when eight members gathered on a Saturday morning at the canoe shop to steam bend and nail on almost all of the ribs. Of the 38 required, 34 went on without a hitch, but four of them decided to crack or break in the bending process and their replacements will be installed when Jeff Morrill will be here to help. At the next session we will be able to start tacking the planking on. As usual the coffee pot will be on at 8am. Greg O'Brien took some nice pictures, here are a few of them.



John Fitzgerald, Bill Clements, Jeff Morrill, Doug Deyoe, Steve Hodge, Greg O'Brien, Gary Amirault and Tom Beckford with most of the ribs in place.



On Saturday, October 21, we started the planking on the new Prospector. Gary Amirault, John Fiske, John Fitzgerald, Steve Hodge and Greg O'Brien gathered here at the

canoe shop to get the first few planks on. Next Saturday, October 28, we will meet again to do more planking and the task should be finished on Saturday, November 4. At that time the hull will be ready to come off the form.



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So here I am, sitting on this multi talented port cockpit seat (capable of playing the roles of shop stool, galley seat and the sofa on which I would land right after coming in the front door (or functional equivalent). This makes it a good place for pondering and for doing a little retrospective to help in figuring out the best way of assembling some of these puzzle pieces I have apparently acquired.

First of all, I'm remembering that in Part IX the following thought had occurred to me, "Are *Dancing Chicken* and the O'Day Mariner beginning (so to speak) to carry on something sort of like a symbiotic relationship in which each will help the other become what they're supposed to be?" Strange perhaps, but true, at this point it seems obvious to me that, metaphorically at least, some such process is indeed taking place.

For example, here's another excerpt from Part IX: "After church during the potluck I showed it (i.e., one of the arch sections) to one of the guys with whom I've been chatting about the boat project and he looked at it and said, 'You've got your design, eh?' and I realized that I hadn't mentioned the arch yet so he was thinking about the design for *Dancing Chicken*. I looked at the arch section and thought, 'Well y'know, maybe. Wow.' I filled him in about the arch project but, of course, at the same time I was also thinking that it wouldn't take much modification for something like this to be part of the frame for *Dancing Chicken*."

Meanwhile the weather was doing what it was doing right before its brief summerlike episode, which was making me think I'd better start getting ready for anything, and fast. So that was when I started "...using *Dancing Chicken's* new work table to build the sections of the arches for the cockpit cover. I figure that she wouldn't mind my doing this since she would undoubtedly agree that it's a good idea to try to make sure that the place where I plan to help her to come to full 3D reality won't get scrunched by snow" (me, Part X).

Then, in the process of this, I started to see how the *Dancing Chicken* puzzle pieces (some of which, designwise, had up until this point actually been missing, I'll explain what I mean by that in a moment) and the arch puzzle pieces were beginning to not only fit and interconnect, but I could almost say to sort of coalesce. I'll elaborate a little more on that in a moment, too.

Essentially, while working on getting *Dancing Chicken's* nest (as I referred to the O'Day in Part X) ready for the expected weather, I seem to have been simultaneously developing a design formulation from the abovementioned puzzle pieces. This means, for one thing, that as soon as I have all the arches up (very soon now, I think) two things will sort of synchronously occur. One is, I will be able to give *Dancing Chicken* back her work table and she and I can resume playing "boat." The other thing is that we will then probably have a plan for the frames that will actually work.

To illustrate this, the next two pictures are of that drawing I made of *Dancing Chicken* a while ago, attached to a temporary work board. Right next to it is sort of a multimedia rough sketch consisting of that drawing with some parts for the arch laid over it.

That the arch pieces are extending below the line of the forefoot of the chine in the drawing is partly because I'm considering lowering that line a couple of inches. This

Dancing Chicken

A MiniSaga in (?) Parts

Part XI

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would bring it more to a point which seems to be a rule of thumb for small craft of this size, i.e., a point such that the "X" is about 6" aft from the forward perpendicular and "Y" is about 6" up from the baseline.

I'm realizing that doing the frames this way will definitely open me up to hearing the comment (such as that from my brother years ago), "She's absurdly overbuilt." (I did actually reduce the size of the scantlings, etc, a bit after he said that and it was probably a good thing). However, it looks to me as though it should work and sturdy is good, right? I like sturdy. After all, I plan to go out on the water in this boat.

Meanwhile, here's that photo I included in Part IX of one section of the arch and below it is a Microsoft Paint drawing of a version of the arch that would fit the curves in the drawing (I figure that the angles extending below the curve can probably be sawn and/or sanded off fairly easily).



I'm realizing that the junctures I drew on the Microsoft Paint picture should probably be more angled, as proper scarf joints should be, but anyway that's the basic idea (also, I'll probably get a better idea about the optimal angles as soon as I get "hands on" with it). It's similar to how Phil Bolger drew "Tor-toise" except that if I build the frame with all

the layers that pertain to it as designed from the pattern of the arches, it will be an independent frame on which I can attach an outer skin of whatever material I decide to use. That way, I could pick something very lightweight and easy to cut and handle.

In fact, I could actually continue with what I had postulated as a possible plan of action way back in Part I, "I think I might build just the frames and then cover them with something "quick and dirty" and take her out on the water, not very far... in very nice warm weather." Hmmmm. Come to think of it, how's that for synchronicity and congruence and stuff like that?

Here we are, in spite of a few minor detours, following along the same lines that were laid out for *Dancing Chicken* at the beginning of her saga. Various circumstances seem to have intersected providentially at this point to enable several elements to combine to make things more possible, or at least more obvious, than they were back then.

For one thing, I really hadn't figured out a plan that I really liked for the curved parts of the hull. Of course, there are various methods for doing that and, of course, I'd turned various ones of those over in my mind but none of them really appealed to me enough so that I really felt comfortable in making them my final choice. And yes, some of them may have been easier, too. But one thing I have definitely decided a long time ago is that "easy" should not necessarily be selected as the main preliminary criterion for anything. And besides, I think that doing it this way will be fun. Building the arches this way is fun and if it's fun I figure maybe it's more likely to actually happen.

The word "absurd" also occurred to me. But have I mentioned that quotation before with which one of my professors at Houston Community College regaled us during one of the classes? Anyway I think it goes something like this, "He who is afraid to attempt the absurd will never achieve the impossible."

Hmmm. Come to think of it, achieving the impossible doesn't really sound to me like part of my goal at this point. And after all, I guess I figure that I not only "attempt" the absurd but, at times, I think I possibly actually achieve it.

Meanwhile, it looks to me as though I have again found or been given some viable puzzle pieces. Will I actually be able to sit down here on my multitasking cockpit seat next to *Dancing Chicken's* little work table aboard the O'Day Mariner and put these puzzle pieces together in a way that will actually work? We shall see.



Addiction

Last issue I started building a new small sailboat. The big question is why? I certainly don't need another boat. The truth is that I have an addiction. I have to be building a boat. It really doesn't make sense but here I am doing it again. In the last 45 years I have built 76 boats. This one will be #77 and it will be named the *Great 77*. The "Great" is a mockery about its small size. I have built canoes as small as a wood strip *Sairy Gamp*, a copy of Ruston's 9-footer and as big as 24'. I built two 24-footers in Al's shop at Northwest Canoe Company. The boats that I built at my employers' shops are not a part of my 76 boat total. Now I am working on #77. I call it an addiction. I just can't help myself, I just have to have a boat in my shop. You readers of *MAIB* may realize that I am not the only contributor to the magazine that has the same addiction.

In the last issue I began building a 10' sailboat of my own design. After making a cardboard model to scale, I cut out the pieces for the bulkheads and side panels and concluded with a photo of these pieces clamped together to check if this design out of my head would fit together OK. After seeing that the parts fit I took this all apart and added some inwales. These were milled out of some $\frac{3}{4}$ " square material that had been bundled up and stored on the canoe rack in my garage. I have kept these survivors from my shop fire several years ago. I knew that I would use them someday and this would be the job that they would do.

These four pieces are 11' feet long and $\frac{3}{4}$ " square, perfect for a 10' boat. I set my table saw up to a 70° cut and chose two pieces and cut off enough material so that in the walls they would give me flat surfaces to attach the deck to when I reached that point in the construction. They got glued and nailed to the top edge of the side panels. I next notched the bulkheads so the new inwales would fit. Then I screwed on the other $\frac{3}{4}$ " square strips near the bottom to the outside.

This was a temporary thing, they would come back off later. I left these strips extended past the ends of the side panels down low. They came in very handy when I reassembled the parts. The lower strips made very good places to wrap some ropes around and pull the sides into place. Things went together much easier with the ropes. This is shown in this photo.



With the ropes snugged up I was able to fit the transoms and everything fell into place. My plan was to epoxy in the tabs that would hold everything together permanently. Before I mixed any resin I wanted to make sure that everything was square. I used some electric fence wire (I have a quarter mile roll) to set up two Spanish windlasses diagonally across the opening between the bulkheads. I ran these wires from one bulkhead to the opposite side of the other. I set up two windlasses diagonally



By Mississippi Bob

across the space then got out the tape measure and checked the diagonal distances. I wound up some on the windlasses until the measurements were the same. Now I felt happy that things were square and it was time to start tabbing everything together.

I had a roll of 3" fiberglass tape (6oz stuff) that I began to cut up into the lengths of each joint that was being tabbed. I rounded all the corners and pulled out a few loose strands on each end. I don't want all the loose stuff showing up as I epoxy them into place. It really makes things much neater to have everything pre-cut before mixing any resin. One joint at a time I wet out the wood and then wet out the tape on the side of a cardboard box. Then I lifted the tape and placed it over the joint, centering it as best I could, then worked it into place with the wet chip brush that I had used to wet thing out. One joint at a time and soon everything was tabbed together.

Why the cardboard box you may ask? I have learned that the resin from the first piece soaked through, leaving enough resin to help wet out all the remaining pieces. I keep laying each piece in the same wet spot from the earlier ones. The box also makes a workbench at a convenient height to do the work. I let things harden until the next day and then removed the wires.

At this point the basic frame is set up and very light. Time to roll it over so I could start fitting the bottom. With the frame now upside down I measured across the bottom then cut an 8' plywood panel $\frac{1}{2}$ " wider than the maximum width. This would become the forward section of the bottom. I now removed the temporary outer walls so I could draw the line that would match the sides.

The bottom panel lay pretty flat on the side panels but I used one clamp at the transom to hold it in place while I marked the bottom panel. Holding my pencil flat against the sides, I drew all the way along the underside of this panel this gave me a slightly oversized bottom panel. I turned this piece over and sawed it slightly more oversized. I put the clamp on the bow to make sure that this plywood section was centered and then started thinking about how to fasten it into place so I could roll the boat back upright to tape the inner seams.

I knew that I could wire tie this panel into place but I wanted to try something different. Years ago I had some business that required that I talk to the late Dynamite Payson. I knew that most of his boats were tack and tape construction. I asked him why he didn't use the stitch and glue method. His answer was sim-

ple, he didn't like getting blood all over his pretty boats. OK, Dynamite, that makes sense so I may try a new system.

I have seen an ad for Chesapeake Light Craftkay showing them holding the deck down with packaging tape while the epoxy cured. OK, that sounds good. I have rolls of duct tape on the shelf, maybe I could just tape the bottom on long enough to epoxy and tape the inside. A photo shows this mistake. Sure looks like it should work. I used up a roll of this tape. Another photo shows this done and I'm ready to turn things upright again. I set the sawhorses up so that they were against the bottom panel and turned the boat again. Now I was ready to tape the inside seams and I left to do other duties.



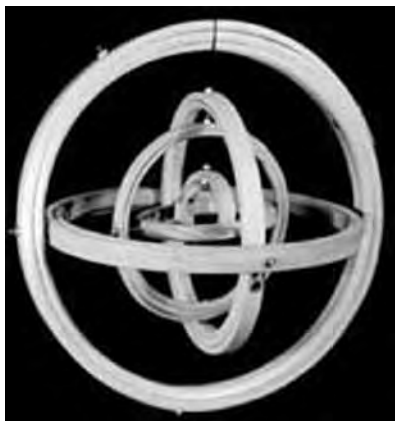
When I returned a few hours later I found that all the tapes had pulled loose and the bottom was hanging loose. OK, wire ties would save the day. The bottom panel was still being held in place by the sawhorses but the gaps between the sides and bottom were much too big to work with so I began to drill holes and tie things back in place with some soft iron wire. The old system worked well. I did manage drill a $\frac{1}{16}$ " hole in the tip of my left middle finger. OK, Dynamite, that's why I have a can of Band Aids on the shop shelf.

I fitted a butt block at the end of the forward panel so I could add the last 2' of the bottom. One horse got moved to where the butt block would fit. I had to epoxy the stern panel to the butt block. I laid some wax paper on the horse so that I didn't glue it to the boat. I put a couple of screws thru the butt block and into the horse, then I could wire tie this section also.

I wanted the finished boat to have radiused edges so I first did a fillet along the inside so I would have something to grind away without cutting through the bottom. Following this fillet I laid in a section of 3" tape and epoxied it into place. This combination gave me a fairly large radius on the inside so the outside could also end up with a good radius. The photo shows the inside of the bottom taped. This photo also shows the location of the butt block.



What to do with the wires you may ask? I cut the wire off where it enters the bottom panel, then I heat the other end with a torch until it is cherry red, give it a few seconds for the heat to soak in until it softens the epoxy and then the wires pull out very nicely. This is where I am as I write this.



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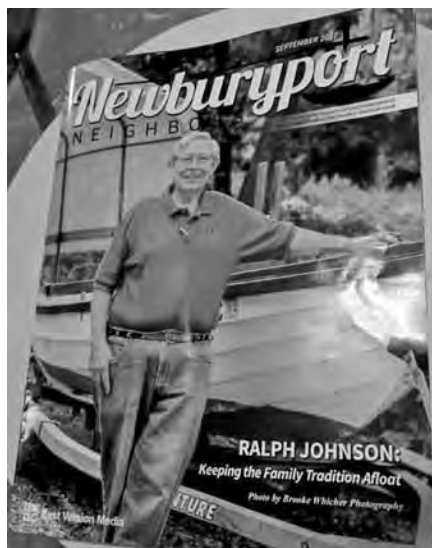
Mast Hoops Are Rolling Out the Door

At Pert Lowell Co. on the Parker River in Newbury, MA

It's been a big year for Ralph Johnson, proprietor of Pert Lowell Co in Newbury, Massachusetts. He's been filling a record number of orders worldwide for the traditional wood mast hoops that have been a stock in trade for the old timey boatshop since WWII when his late father-in-law, Pert Lowell, began making them for the US Air Force for their towed aerial gunnery targets (see the whole story on the opposite page from our October 1, 1983 issue). Ralph even was too busy to accept an invitation to do a demo of his hoop making at the Sail Boston extravaganza last summer.

Well, there were some mitigating circumstances to that invitation. It seems the organizers offered him a small stipend to do his demo at the Charlestown Navy Yard during the tall ships visit. What an opportunity!

Ralph made the cover of the local *Newburyport Neighbor* this past summer.



But then came the fine print. He could not bring propane tanks into the yard (a national historic site featuring *Old Ironsides*, the *USS Constitution*, see "Sail Boston," pages 6-9) for heating the boiling water needed to soften the hoop stock before bending. He could not park his truck onsite adjacent to his demo setup (parking anywhere nearby was impossible).

Faced with these obstacles to properly doing his demonstration, Ralph politely declined, anyway he had a firm order for 32 30" hoops to deliver to the *Spirit of South Carolina* at the event. It seems that the vessel had suffered major damage to its worn out hoops in rough weather around Bermuda enroute to Sail Boston and needed replacements to be able to sail home. For Ralph this was "A bird in the hand..."

The tall ships community has been a boon to Ralph as they all need correct period wooden mast hoops and Pert Lowell Co is about the only game in town (like maybe buggy whips?). But many owners of much smaller private yachts hanker for the "real thing" when they take a look at the plastic hoops that come stock on their boats. Ralph is seeing a steady flow of smaller orders for smaller hoops as a result.

But wait, there's another side to this hoop thing. Ralph calls them "Authentic Nautical Furnishings." Hoops can be utilized in a number of decorative ways far from the beckoning tall masts (see at left), and as I write this at the end of October with sailing season over and holiday gift giving looming ahead, the shop is busy turning out hoops of all sizes for these potential gifts. Look into this if you're looking for affordable nautical gifts with real character made by New England Yankees and not in China.

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Biggest Hoops Yet!

Report & Photos by Bob Hicks

The Pert Lowell Co. consists of two men, Pert Lowell and his son in law, Ralph Johnson. They work in a little shop on the shore of the Parker River in Newbury, Massachusetts. Mostly they make mast hoops, something Pert's been doing since World War II. They also now have begun building the famed Town Class sloop again in wood, to order. Pert built the first of the Townies back in the '30's, working then for his father, Marcus Lowell. Pert worked on the very first Townie just over 50 years ago, and today, at 76, he's still at it.

In July just past Pert and Ralph have just completed the biggest order for the biggest mast hoops they have ever built, 50 hoops of 3 foot diameter to go on the west coast historic schooner, C.A. THAYER. The THAYER belongs to the San Francisco Maritime State Historical Monument and is on display there. She ended her days of commercial sail in 1950, and after a brief commercial venture as a "pirate" ship in the northwest, came into the possession of the state. The THAYER was built in 1895 as a lumber schooner, later worked as a fishing schooner in the Bering Sea, and continued to function hauling cargo until 1950, the very last of the west coast sailing fleet, an anachronism by the time she was retired and the object of much press attention as a result.

The restorers came to Pert Lowell for the new mast hoops to fit on those towering spars because Pert's just about the only source for the real thing, red oak hoops wound up on forms after boiling in hot water to soften the wood. Pert's usual trade runs in the 6" to 15" size range, the largest previous hoops were



24 inch diameter. So these monsters required some improvisation to make.

The red oak was delivered from the sawmill in 30 foot lengths, sawn 1" by 2". Each of these strips would become a single hoop. Now, there's a mathematical issue involved in a hoop of this scale. The inside diameter of 34" is 5" smaller than the outside diameter after the 1" thick stock is rolled around the form two and a half times. The circumference is thus about 15" longer on the outside than the inside. This means the oak has to compress on the inside and stretch on the outside a combined total of these 15". Well, that just aint possible, the wood fractures.

So, before the boiling, Pert saws the wood lengthwise on its 1" dimension into two 1/2" by 2" strips, leaving one end still joined for a few inches. Now the wood can creep along itself as it is wound onto the form more easily. Next boiling. Pert doesn't steam, he boils. It doesn't discolor the wood as much and the wood is easier to handle hot from the tank barehanded. Yes, barehanded. After 40 years...

Well, Pert's tank was 16' long. How to boil 30'? He made a shallow wooden trough, attached it to one end of the stainless tank, (itself a shallow trough, set up on a slight incline. A pump was installed to pump boiling water from the tank to the far end of the wooden trough where it would run down over the oak strip back into the main tank. A half hour of this and the wood was ready.

Now to bend the hoop. The uncut end of the split strip was fastened to the edge of the 34" diameter form, just a wooden wheel actually. The far end was held by Pert on the floor to keep the two parts aligned in the 2" dimension. Ralph and another strong helper brought in for the occasion then "rolled" the form along the floor on top of the oak strip, rolling the oak onto the form as they went. It took all their might to keep it tight and in line. When they arrived at Pert, a waiting screw was fastened through the oak to hold it. Of course the inner "section" of the split strip went on around the form further than the outer as the difference in circumference manifested itself.

The hoop was then removed from the form and set aside to dry. Later it would be through bolted permanently, sanded smooth, oiled and readied for varnishing.

They did this 60 times, making extra hoops because sometimes the wood is just about all wound on when "crack", the oak lets go in a weak spot. Even though it was specially ordered clear stock, hidden flaws do exist in the wood.

So when the sails are hauled aloft on those three towering masts, they'll be riding up on these hoops made right here in New England in what has got to be one of our most unique remaining "old ways" specialty workshops. If ever you are in need of real mast hoops, Pert Lowell's the man to see, he's made them from 3" on up diameter, reasonably priced, just the way they used to be made. Pert Lowell Company is located at Lane's End in Newbury, Mass, just off Rt. 1A at the Parker River bridge. The phone number is (617) 462-7409.



This report is to fulfill the promise made after building both the Chuckanut 12 and the Sawfish 12 to compare both on the water. My objective is not to state which is the “best,” but to point out the pros and cons of each and compare them to a known benchmark, the Wilderness Systems Pungo 12, one of the best recreational kayaks ever made and one which we previously owned for about 14 years and still remains in production. All three are recreational kayaks of approximately 12'x28".

The morning of June 7, 2017, dawned somewhat cloudy but with no rain forecast, so we lowered the Sawfish and Chuckanut from their garage ceiling hoists to the J-Racks on the roof of our trusty Subaru Forester, strapped them down and headed out the overhead door. We didn't get far! Even though our previous plastic Pungos, when mounted on Thule Stackers, cleared the door openings with no problem, neither of these boats, with similar beam measurements, would clear!

I had decided that our Thule Stackers were not appropriate for the fabric covered Chuckanut 12 as the Stackers pushed against the fabric in an unsupported area just under the gunwale, threatening to damage or stretch the fabric, so I had ordered two sets of J-Racks from Amazon for \$40 to handle these more delicate boats easily. Unfortunately these racks raised the boat about 1", thus causing the clearance problem. No big deal, we just removed the boats, moved the Forester outside and remounted them.



Chuckanut (foreground) and Sawfish (rear).



Sawfish 12 Chuckanut 12 WS Pungo120 A Comparison

By Jim Brown

The chosen venue was the Notchy Creek Wildlife Recreation Area on Tellico Lake near Vonore, Tennessee, which is part of the TVA system of lakes and rivers. There are two paved ramps and numerous grassy areas suitable for launching kayaks.

The cast of characters: Jim Brown, age 83, 6'3", 220 lbs; Carole Brown, wife, age 78, 5'4", 130 lbs; Tom Brown, son, age 49, 6'2", 195 lbs. Jim and Carole have been recreational kayakers on and off for about 20 years with no whitewater or big ocean experience, just smooth paddling on lakes or salt water estuaries of the ICW, and we do not consider ourselves to be much more than novices. Tom had paddled kayaks only a few times before. So we are not expert kayakers, perhaps just typical casual kayak owners. As the day progressed, the slight breeze increased into a moderate crosswind.

So which will be your choice? It all depends on who you are and what you want. If money is no object, the best thing would be to buy a new Pungo 12, or better yet, find a good used one. I recently sold our two Pungos (120 and 140) for \$800 within hours of putting them on the Knoxville craigslist. That was before I realized what new ones would cost these days. They were 14 years old but in excellent shape and had always been stored indoors or under a roof.

If you want to spend less money, like working with wood, can obtain the marine plywood for the frames and western red cedar for the stringers locally for a good price, like the appearance of craftsmanship and the unique structure of skin-on-frame and are agile enough for the more difficult ingress and egress, go with the Chuckanut 12. I am sure you will be able to build one that is lighter and for less money than was my experience. For instance, I had used GCI Sit-Backer stadium seats in both boats which cost \$27 each and weighed 3-5lbs each depending on mounts needed. Perhaps this boat could be built in the 30-35lb range.

If you want to spend even less money, want the most bang for the buck, want the lightest of these boats together with good recreational performance and don't mind a little wetter ride due to no coamings, go with the

Sawfish 12. I think this boat can be built even lighter, perhaps down in the 25-28lb range.

The consensus of our little group was that we liked handling and paddling the Sawfish 12 better than the Chuckanut 12. The Sawfish 12 had a 3" deep foam bottom stroke which gave it excellent tracking in the crosswind. It also had a neat place to carry a small Playmate cooler in the bow and a waterproof storage area under the rear deck for carrying dry clothes or whatever. My Sawfish was built somewhat differently from Rowerwet's instructions as it used four layers of 2" foam rather than three and therefore had more freeboard than the original.

The Chuckanut was heavier and sat with the bow high and the stern low, even with the seat moved 3" forward of the rear bulkhead. The crosswind tended to blow the high bow off course. The seat should be moved further forward. There was no convenient storage area (my fault as I had mounted foam flotation in areas that could be used for storage, though that storage would not be waterproof). Also, it was somewhat more difficult to dewater the paddle drippings from the Chuckanut.

So what do we plan to do next? If I were to build another kayak today it would be another modified Sawfish 12. I have some ideas for improvements but summer was a time for paddling, not building, except maybe on rainy days.

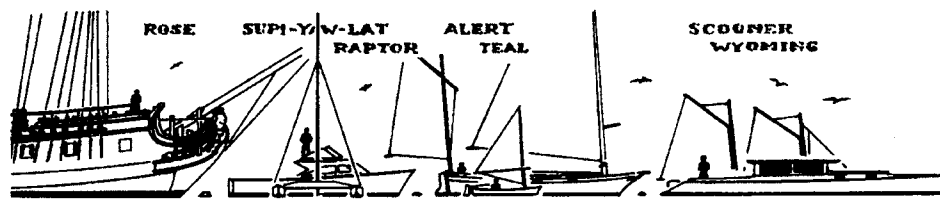
However, a more serious question for Carole and myself is whether we really want to do much more paddling. As you might discern from our priorities, we are at an age when we are not as agile nor physically able as we once were, especially me. Other folks with other priorities might well decide on different preferences from us.

One option for us is to make more use of our Gheenoe 15-4, with its super reliable 5hp Mercury four-stroke, to explore the many local lakes. I had bought the 1980 Gheenoe a few years ago and restored it to like new condition. It is mounted on a galvanized trailer capable of carrying many times the weight of the Gheenoe so no overhead lifting required. Just hitch up and go.

I hope this simple comparison has been helpful to anyone considering building a kayak. Of course, there are many other possibilities and lots of plans are available these days from sources like *Duckworks Magazine* and *Messing About in Boats*, including everything from gorgeous strip built museum-grade pieces of art to ultra light designs by Platt Monfort. A few pix are attached. Happy building and paddling!

The pair make good paddling companions.





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A shorter edited version of this perspective ran on October 3 in the *Gloucester Daily Times*, the paper of record in America's Oldest Fishing Port, in the seagoing business since 1623. This particular perspective on our fleet's daily work bears bringing up here in *MAIB* as well. But before bringing you my original draft of the piece, I'll add some extensive introductory remarks.

While there are quite a few professional mariners reading *MAIB*, for us weekend, and at best, part timers, bringing up the touchy issue of pursuing "sinking resistance" is just as important. On many boats it may only take a bit of bad luck, a distraction running the boat, someone else's error, sudden bad weather to produce tragedies, whether happening one at a time or all coming together at once.

There are lots of ways to die on the water and therefore often a bit or a lot more to be done to at least keep the boat from going out from under our feet. The daughter of a man who died from a stroke while sailing his 15' Micro Cat Yawl wrote to us of how comforted she felt, under the tragic circumstances, that the boat he had built to Phil's design had fortuitously sailed itself onto a beach with her father aboard where folks had found boat and dead skipper. She knew that the craft had tracked steady and would have been hard to sink the way he had built her. Lucky for all that the boat did not test its sinking resistance through a sharp edged collision below the waterline and, of course, that she was headed in the right direction during moderate weather.

Over ten years ago a younger draggerman and his one man crew on his steel dragger did not come back from an inshore fishing trip during a cold but quiet January night, with the substantial craft sinking, possibly rolled by a tow wire between a tug and a barge or catching an odd swell with too much top hamper in the wrong place, or whatever, speculations abound. Left alone ashore were a pregnant widow with a three-year-old boy on her hands, all three now facing life without father. Some voices in the community expressed frustrations with the Coast Guard's response time.

Following upon this catastrophe, more energy seemed to have been spent on the elaborate church funeral rituals than ever has been spent on any waterfront wide discussion to make the working fleet safer by raising awareness about pursuing a safer boat configuration belowdecks and developing best on deck and on wheelhouse gear weight management practices. To this day there have been no round tables, no meetings, no ongoing conversations that we've been able to detect. Apparently this is something we don't talk about.

A bit over a year ago a sizable wooden fishing craft began to sink, was assisted and then towed towards home by another fishing craft with pumps running and with the Coast Guard coming to assist as well, getting the crew safely off her into survival suits and

Phil Bolger & Friends On Design

Design Column #518 in *MAIB* "Coming Back Home from the Sea"

into the water, but with the owner apparently succumbing to the stress, and then the boat sinking as the water overwhelmed the pumps. Dead owner/operator, surviving crew and heartache all around amongst families and friends. No survivor forgets that close call at sea, trauma all around. In this context, the Coast Guard does all it can between offering training for properly using and maintaining survival suits and life rafts for instance and keeping lifeboats and helicopters ready to go 24/7/365.

No boat can be made completely disaster proof, but we can go a long way to make her more forgiving when we make mistakes or when uncontrollable events surprise boat and crew. In our archives, quite a few types going back to the first designs in 1952 do suggest that builders and owners and our office may want to explore greater margins of safety on matters relative to sinking resistance, for instance. We can always try for more.

I recently saw that draggerman's young family at the Fisherman's Memorial Service again late this summer. Stomach turning realities and survivors, families and friends related to the more recent tragedy spoke about their losses. Always a moving, if not disturbing event. While it is good to see the resilience of surviving victims, their lives will be forever altered in a darker way.

Phil and I had repeatedly kicked around raising this issue, but even around this year's Fishermen's Memorial Service quite a few locals from different walks of life argued against even considering such a piece since there are always new widows, orphans, survivors who have lost a family member, a friend. Too raw an issue.

But, of course, to reduce the likelihood of seeing more widows, more orphans, more lost boats has been the long overdue issue, if not even obligation. Hence the need to cut through the passive acceptance of such dark potentialities, whether as a matter of any given "that's how it's always been in this fishing cultur," or worse, indifference if not knowingly rolling the dice.

Fortunately, through the courtesy of a resonant newspaper editor, this subject finally got in local print and no blowback so far. However, we can't avoid wondering about the most recent loss around that wooden craft going down. On this daily paper's Op Ed page there was a generous but ultimately limited word count possible to make the argument and thus no room for illustrations but, here in much heftier *MAIB* with a most col-

laboratively minded editor, this longer perspective is possible, this time with illustrations. Here my draft of the *GDT* piece:

"On the Working Waterfront there is never really a good time to talk about folks dying at sea. Whichever way we have lost loved ones and friends, the pain and gaping holes in our lives will indeed be unforgettable in the worst way. And while many losses are often unavoidable, so many times we'd still wish that you could have done something to perhaps even prevent this horrendous life altering loss.

The worst nightmare is the sinking of a boat with all hands. The many thousands of dead memorialized at our Man-At-The-Wheel Memorial on the Boulevard died under all sorts of circumstances, so many vessels lost with all crew.

As part of our Working Waterfront, this design office has done the work of designing boats since 1952. While there are fortunately no deaths related to our work, the many ways to not come back home from the sea are familiar. By design, or just vessel upgrades, as far as plausible in the given project, we'd want to minimize the risks of losing lives at sea. Apart from greater peace of mind amongst crew and their families, immediate effects for boat owners should also be lower insurance rates.

High on the list of priorities of designers, builders, owners, but also crew of work- and pleasure boats, should be the examination of what it would take to keep a hull from sinking to begin with! So, instead of sick *Titanic* jokes, what is called for is the stone cold sober examination of the boat's structural materials, geometries, onboard systems, budgets, timelines and your own ethics:

1. We know that just about all woods used in boat building since the dawn of man will float, some better than others, but will typically stay at the surface of the pond or ocean.

2. We know that most manmade hull materials won't float, such as steel, aluminum, uncured fiberglass, ferrocement, with some cored fiberglass laminations possibly providing at least neutral weight submerged.

3. We know that seawater weighs 64lbs per cubic foot, fresh water 62.4lbs. So if we want something to float, it had better weigh less than the given water in which the boat will be used.

4. Measured per cubic foot, Douglas fir weighs about 33lbs, mahogany some 34lbs, red cedar 24lbs, meaning that they'll support another 25-35lbs of additional weight easily before being awash.

5. However, aluminum will weigh around 165lbs per cubic foot, meaning an aluminum hull will sink if wide open internally when perforated, as will steel at 490lbs.

Apart from being much more sustainable, wooden hulls can thus be easier to keep afloat after an uncontrollable hull breach due to dramatic collision or just the ignominious failure of that \$3.57 seacock hose clamp. Why?

a. We'd add up all the heavier than water items aboard, such as drive train, winches, hydraulics, anchors, batteries to figure out what the actual weight is, that will contribute to her sinking.

b. Then figure (tediously) how much wood structure we have in that hull to float it. If the hull won't be able to support all that, then we want to...

c. Consider the addition of closed cell foam, white, pink, baby blue from the home center, weighing in at just 1-2lbs per cubic foot in as many cubic feet as necessary, located reliably in carefully selected places belowdecks to give her that additional margin of error to survive the hull breach to at least be towed home, perhaps even run home after enough time for makeshift repairs. Properly done to not harm the structure, many wooden hulls can thus be upgraded towards staying at the surface for comparatively modest money.

Hulls in steel, aluminum and most fiberglass laminates will need to have rigorously built-in compartmentalizing throughout their hull structure. With enough such watertight divisions, such hulls can be made to survive many catastrophic scenarios, like the 47' aluminum Coast Guard motor lifeboats down on Harbor Loop have been tested to. While these divisions should be integrated during design and construction at modest cost, more involved retrofitting of older hulls still seems worthwhile investigating in light of the crushing cost of losing lives.

We can't fix all hulls and not all owners would care to make their boats much safer. Actually, many fiberglass production and custom boats built for pleasure and for work, including oceanic duty, do not have this safety built in and they still sell. Even new Coast Guard rules for the fishing fleet have apparently no provisions towards hard built-in sinking resistance of the future fleet beyond just compartmentalizing.

In contrast, almost 40 years ago this office designed e.g., a wood composite 50' x 32,000lbs x 1,250sf sail area luxury yacht, specified and built to be highly "sinking resistant" via added built-in foam.

The 39' x 8,400lbs x 225hp plywood/foam/epoxy/fiberglass patrol boat we designed for the US Navy and built at the Maritime Heritage Center in collaboration with the city, was launched in 2015 with a substantial amount of what is technically called hard built-in "positive buoyancy," meaning she should remain afloat after hull-breach, hatches and doors open. Mayor Theken's test ride that summer was indeed aboard one of the safer vessels in this port.

We even ran numbers on our 1969 design of the 450-ton heavy wooden 24-gun frigate replica, *HMS Rose*, lead actress in the 2003 movie *Master & Commander*, and those suggested that upgrades could keep that massive structure afloat towards her 50th without ruining her interior with compartmentalizing or intrusive piles of foam.

Clearly no need for more regulations! Just prudent owner choices.

However, this design office won't assume responsibility for other peoples' designs and construction. Similar to the format here, only informal counsel about the basics involved would be available and never for money!

So by the next Fishermen's Memorial Service in 2018, as fishing and yachting folks here in America's Oldest Seaport, we will have perhaps begun taking increasingly ambitious steps to reduce the risks for further such loss of life. As a matter of our port's history, we sure should lead on this. We, of all people, should reject the dark reflex of accepting what in quite a few cases could be preventable deaths! And don't blame the Coast Guard when the pleasure or fishing boat won't support its crew in the hours of most urgent need.

Plenty of folks in town have seen this piece. Next steps would be to indeed organize a round table on this issue, broadening awareness of operators, their families and friends, along with pulling together city and federal resources to focus on the issue, from our Harbor Master to the good folks serving at our Gloucester Coast Guard Station and the Boat Safety specialists out of the Boston Base. Of course, nothing of the like may happen, with the dark acceptance of unnecessary deaths to continue, but that would suggest that I'd shut up, which I won't.



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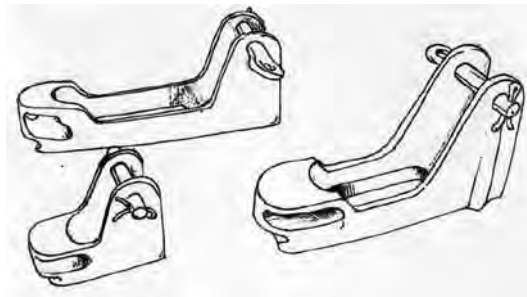


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The 50-footer is Design #380, *Tonweya*, of 1979, a centerboard Chinese lugger measuring 50' x 13' x 2'9" x 1,258sf of sail. To support "sinking resistance" of her wood composite construction, she was designed to carry closed cell foam in compartments in her front and rear quarters to make sure she could float her near 8,400lbs ballast keel.



Every reader of *MAIB* remembers the near-endless discussion of building and testing Design #681 *SACPAS-3/Gadabout* measuring 39'1" x 7'5" x 14" x 8,400lbs x 225hp x 25+knots. Beyond being of plywood epoxy fiberglass construction, she carries closed cell foam along some two-thirds of her length in a topsides belt ending forward beyond her helm station, in her vee nose, under her aft-cockpit and in her rooftop lamination.



Design #225 *HMS Rose* of 1970 was featured just recently in *MAIB* of March 2017, in much of her glory of 114'10" x 30' beam x 12' draft x 458 long tons. just not under the solar/wind power of her 13,000 square feet of sail. *Woodenboat* #172 of May/June 2003, p.104-106, featured Phil's review of Capt Daniel S. Parrotts *Tall Ships Down*, a book length accounting of how modern replicas suddenly capsize and sink.

On the occasion of that opportunity to write on the issue, we had explored a range of our designs as to what it would take for builders and owners to keep them afloat, including Design #225, *HMS Rose*, between her massive wooden structure and placing foam disguised as cargo and cabins mostly in her hold, we found that we could more than balance out her 125 tons of ballast. Flooded, she would not be fit to sail but should stay afloat at the surface and rolling deep and slow. Whether repaired and pumped out then and there or towed to port, she should not become a tragic total loss.



Fish Class

Designed by

Rathbone De Buys ~1918

for the

Gulf Yachting Assoc.

Sail Plan shown ~1949

20'-6" LOD

6'-1 1/2" Beam

3'-0" Draft



Small Craft Illustration #3 by Irwin Schuster

Irwin.schuster@verizon.net

Our '73 Ford Mustang was not running right. I took it into a local shop to see what was wrong (electronic ignition problem). While I was there a man brought in his car because the speedometer was no longer working. After looking into the problem, the shop manager informed him that he would have to take the car to the dealership to have the instrument panel module replaced as the problem was in the electronics in the panel and the whole panel would have to be replaced and reprogrammed (estimated cost \$600). Considering some of the instrument setups I am seeing on the new boats, I wonder how long it will be before those in the boating world will be stuck with the same problem. Gauge acting up? Replace the whole panel as we cannot replace/fix the gauge.

The old lubricant spray cans usually had a stiff, add-on plastic tube to direct the spray into a small area. Sometimes the tube stayed in place while the lubricant was sprayed where it was wanted. Sometimes the tube did not stay in place and the spray went everywhere. When the can was empty, it and the tube were usually discarded and a new can (with tube) purchased. We have a number of plastic bird feeder "baskets" with small drainage holes in the bottom. Of course, the bird food covers over these holes and they need to be cleaned out from time to time. Guess what? The small tubes that came with the lubricant cans have just the right outside diameter to slide into the holes and clean them out quite nicely.

The 2016 recreational boating statistics are out. You can look at the data for your state as well as nationwide. Florida came in first in the number of casualties and deaths while California came in second in the number of casualties but third in the number of deaths. The total recreational boating deaths was 701 and the number of injuries was 2,903 out of 4,463 reported casualties. Of course, not all accidents are reported and the count only includes registered vessels which can lead to slightly inaccurate data. One time I did a careful study of the full Coast Guard recreational boating statistics to see when was the "safest" time to be on the water and in what kind of boat. The answer was a 14'-16' foot open boat with a 5-10hp outboard motor between 1am and 4am with poor visibility and small craft warning (resulted in the least reported accidents and deaths).



From the Lee Rail

By C. Henry Depew

I am not sure that a 12volt battery that weighs over 150lbs is desirable for recreational craft. Of course, with cold crank capability of over 1,000amps such a battery might be desirable in some locations/seasons (wintertime?) and the ability to replace a weak or bad cell at the dock (or on the water) could also be beneficial. If interested in more information, take a look at <www.rollsbattery.com>.

Sailors use safety harnesses and tethers connected to jacklines on the boat in rough seas. Sometimes the equipment fails or something else goes wrong and the sailor is swept overboard. One of the potential problems with tethers is that the length needed to get to various parts of the boat is longer than needed to keep the sailor onboard so the sailor gets dragged alongside the boat when he goes overboard. Commercial seamen have the same need for tethers in some conditions and one solution is the adaptation of a traveler car to a rail that allows the seaman to move about the vessel and still be attached to the ship. Look at the mainsheet traveler system on most medium to large sailboats and you will get the idea. Instead of a block, the tether is attached to the traveler car and moves along the traveler rail with the sailor/seaman. Of course, a special run of the proper size rail is needed on both sides of the boat and the traveler car to make this work. But the removal of the jack lines would be one less item to trip over in the dark or in rough weather.

For those of you who read the above and say, "But I have lifelines and stanchions to keep people onboard," be advised that people have been washed between the life lines and stanchions are known to fail under load. In fact, my boat partner lost his footing and took out one stanchion and bent another in rough seas. He stayed onboard but we had some repair work to do when the boat was back at the float.

If you have inflatable PFDs, you may want to check with any airline you may use to make sure they will accept the CO₂ cylinders that go with the inflatable. It seems that some airlines will allow the cylinder in the baggage and some will not. In other cases they can be in the carry-on (will be inspected by the TSA people) or not depending on the airline. It might be easier to purchase an inflatable online and have it shipped to your travel destination timed to arrive when you do. Some of those who scuba dive run into the same type of problem with their air tanks and ship them via FedEx or UPS to where they are going. If you use the ordering or shipping approach, it is a good idea to have a designated recipient at the other end who knows the material is coming and will hold it for you once it arrives.

Many years ago, we had a sailboat race from Shell Point to Dog Island (northern Gulf of Mexico below Tallahassee, Florida). In past years we would sail around Dog Island and back to Shell Point. This time we decided to race to Dog Island and spend the night and then have a second race back to Shell Point the next day to avoid the rounding of Dog Island (and the narrow Intracoastal channel on the bay side) at night. It was a great race over and everyone had a good time at the party. We all anchored our boats and went to sleep.

However, it became windy overnight and about 2am one boat's anchor started dragging. Of course, it was upwind of most of the anchored boats and the late night became a frantic time of fending off the boat as it came into the anchored fleet. The boat was secured and no one was hurt and none of the boats damaged. But the failure of one anchor to hold caused a lot of anxiety before it was over.

This event came back to mind as I read about boats damaged by storm wind and high water resulting from the hurricanes that came through Florida this year. A number of boats were damaged/sunk because one or more boats in the marina came loose and started drifting. Unlike our situation at Dog Island (plenty of people available), in these cases, everyone had gone to high ground and there was no one to do anything about the drifting boat(s). Even if your boat is well secured for storm winds and water, what about those around you and how much insurance coverage do you have in such a case?



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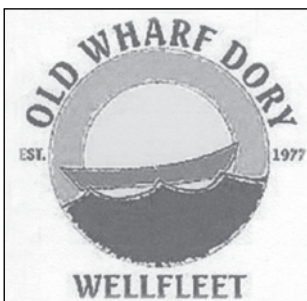
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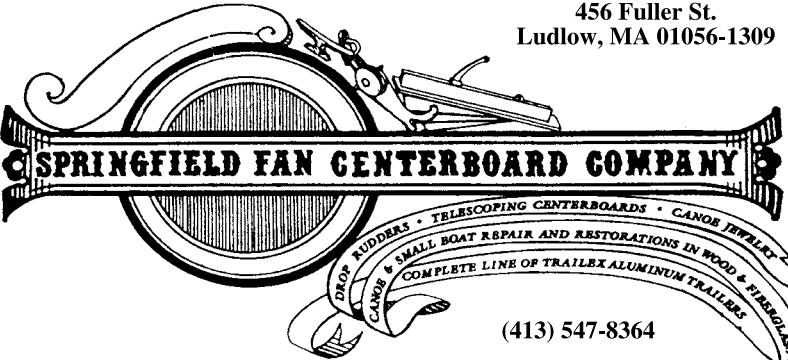
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